★ Sept. 15, 1951

THE NEW YORKER

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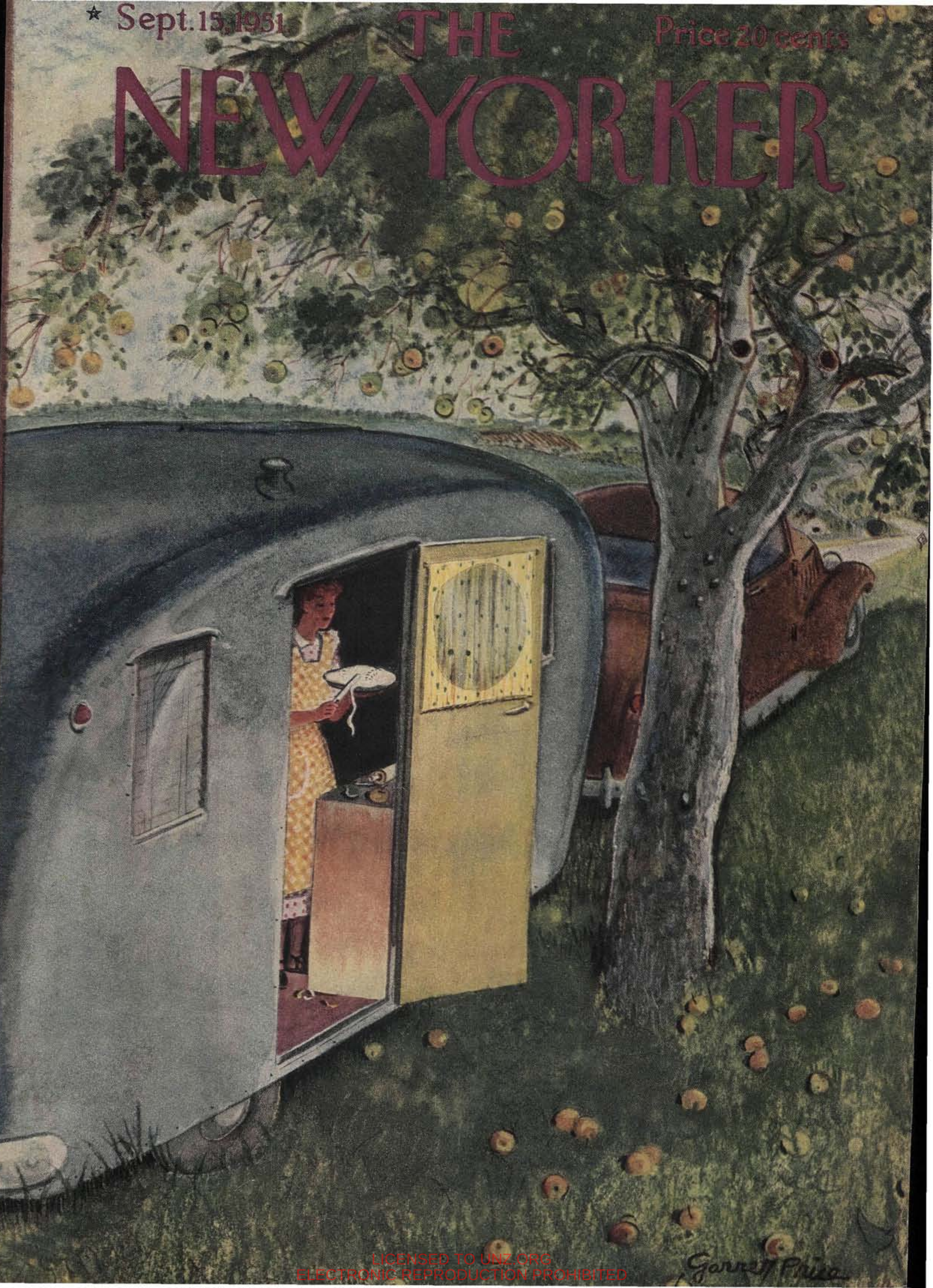
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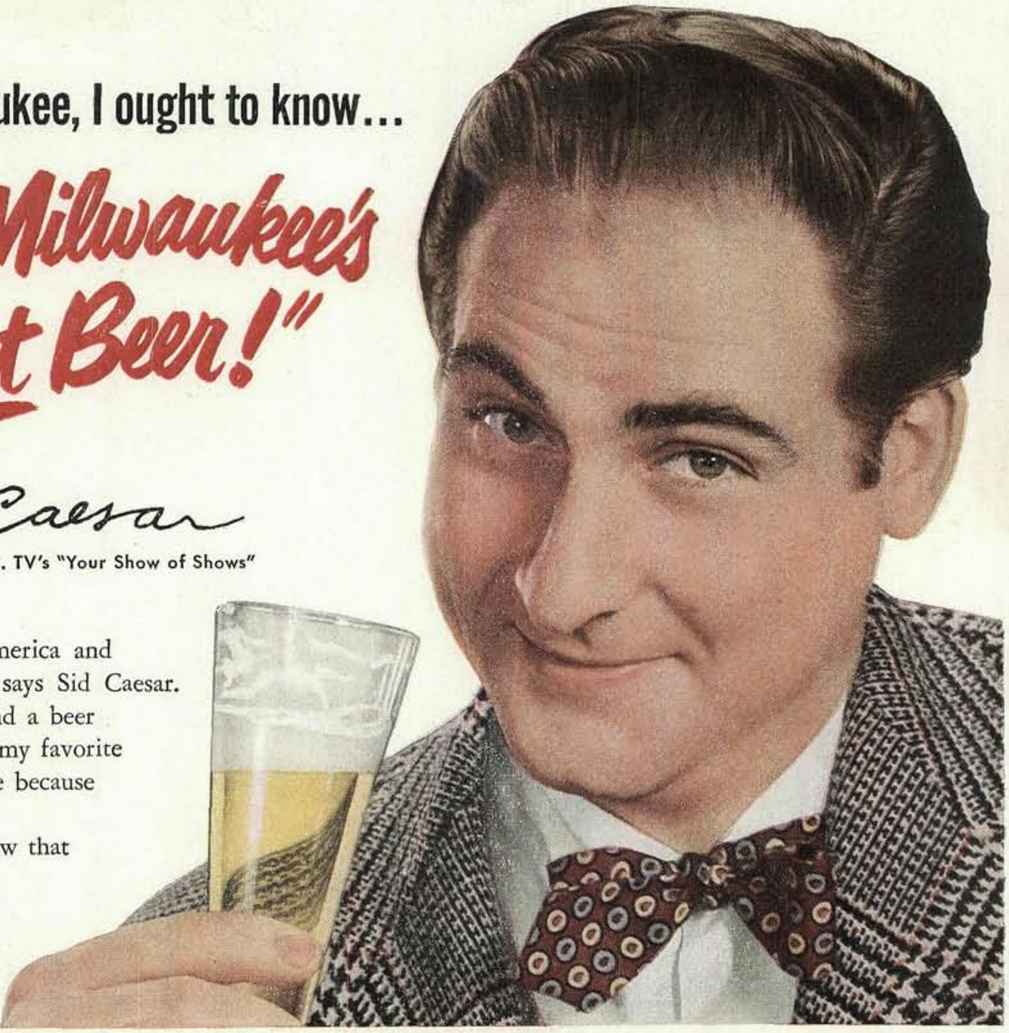
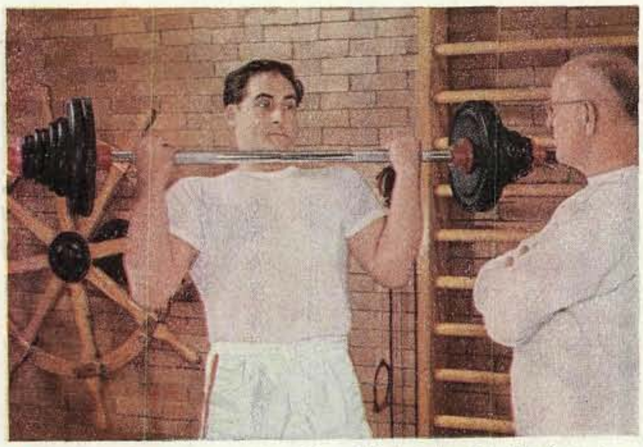


● "I've entertained all over America and tasted beers all over America," says Sid Caesar. "And nowhere have I found a beer that compares with Blatz. It's my favorite and Milwaukee's favorite because it's Milwaukee's *finest* beer." Yes! *Official figures* show that Blatz is the *largest selling beer in Milwaukee and all Wisconsin,* too. Try Blatz Beer, today!



● On a recent trip to Milwaukee, Sid indulged in his favorite sport, weight lifting; "curled" a bar bell at Milwaukee's famed Athletic Club. Looking on is Gus Christie, Club Athletic Director and former noted Milwaukee boxer.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

(E. and W. mean East and West of Broadway.)

PLAYS

Diamond Lil—Who but Mae West? A limited return engagement of this famous bicycle act. Produced by George Brandt and directed by Charles Freeman. Opens Friday, Sept. 14. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. CI 7-2887. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8:40; opening-night curtain at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:40.)

Lace on Her Petticoat—Neva Patterson, Jeff Morrow, and Muriel Aked in a comedy-drama by Aimée Stuart. Produced and directed by Herman Shumlin. (Booth, 45th St., W. CI 6-5969. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:40. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:40.)

The Moon Is Blue—A smooth and surefire comedy, by F. Hugh Herbert, about a boy who gets a girl in three acts. With Donald Cook, Barbara Bel Geddes, and Barry Nelson. (Henry Miller, 43rd St., E. BR 9-3970. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Thursdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

The Rose Tattoo—Tennessee Williams' lively drama about a perfervid Sicilian woman who keeps her late husband's ashes enshrined in her living room and lets a rather inadequate slip serve as her widow's weeds. Maureen Stapleton is splendid as the lady, and Eli Wallach is quite diverting as a truck driver who helps convince her that any kind of live man is better than a dead one. (Martin Beck, 45th St., W. CI 6-6363. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:40. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:40.)

Stalag 17—A comedy melodrama that will be fairly rough going for anyone unaccustomed to functional jokes. It concerns life in a German prison camp, where scatological humor is all the rage. Directed by José Ferrer, the play includes in its cast John Ericson, Harvey Lembeck, Laurence Hugo, and Frank Maxwell. (48th Street Theatre, 48th St., E. CI 5-4396. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:40. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:40.)

Long Run—affairs of state: Washington love and politics. Now with June Havoc. (Music Box, 45th St., W. CI 6-4636. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

MUSICALS

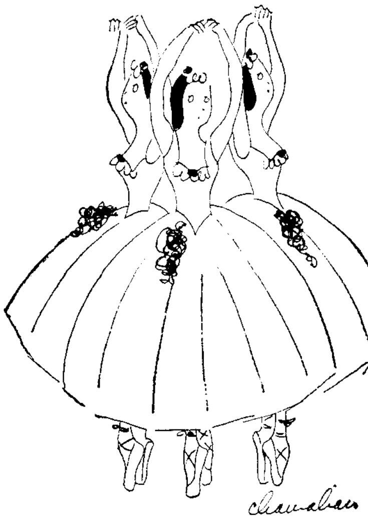
The King and I—A bright and handsome view of Siam, in the best recent Rodgers and Hammerstein tradition. Gertrude Lawrence heads the cast, and gets notable support from Yul Brynner and others. (St. James, 44th St., W. LA 4-4664. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:25. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:25.)

Seventeen—A musical version of the Booth Tarkington novel that is not without its moments. Sally Benson is responsible for the book, and Ann Crowley, Kenneth Nelson, Frank Albertson, and Doris Dalton are some of the Hoosiers. (Broadhurst, 44th St., W. CI 6-6699. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn—From the novel of the same title, Betty Smith, the original author, and George Abbott have fashioned an adaptation that has both humor and pathos. It also has nice songs by Arthur Schwartz and Dorothy Fields and a magnificently funny performance by Shirley Booth. Johnny Johnston, Marcia Van Dyke, and Nathaniel Frey are among those supporting Miss Booth. (Alvin, 52nd St., W. CI 5-5226. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

Two on the Aisle—Bert Lahr, Dolores Gray, and a good company in a fast but not particularly distinguished revue. (Mark Hellinger, Broadway at 51st St. PL 7-7064. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

Long Runs—call me madam: Ethel Merman, the lady ambassador to Lichtenburg. Irving Berlin wrote the songs, and Paul Lukas, Alan Hewitt, and Pat Harrington help out in the cast. (Imperial, 45th St., W. CO 5-2412. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.) . . . **gentlemen prefer blondes:** Lorelei Lee and her trip abroad. Carol Channing, Yvonne Adair, and Jack McCauley populate the Anita Loos story. (Ziegfeld, Sixth Ave. at 54th St. CI 5-5200. Nightly at 8:30. Matinée Saturday at 2:30. Closes Saturday, Sept. 15.) . . . **guys and dolls:** A dash of Damon Runyon, with music and lyrics by Frank Loesser and a cast that includes Robert Alda, Sam Levene, Isabel Bigley, and Martha Stewart. (46th Street Theatre, 46th St., W. CI 6-4271. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.) . . . **south pacific:** Anybody here doesn't know about "South Pacific"? Roger Rico is playing opposite Martha Wright these days. (Majestic, 44th St., W. CI 6-0730. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:25. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:25. Special performance for the Equity Welfare Fund Sunday evening, Sept. 16.)



A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22

OPENINGS

(There are often last-minute changes in dates and curtain times, so it is a good idea to verify them before starting out.)

Out West of Eighth—A comedy by Kenyon Nicholson, with a cast that includes Richard Carlyle, Robert Keith, Jr., and Barbara Baxley. Produced by Courtney Burr and Malcolm Pearson, and directed by Marc Connelly. Opens Thursday, Sept. 20. (Ethel Barrymore, 47th St., W. CI 6-0390. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:40; opening-night curtain at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:40.)

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BALLET

New York City Ballet Company—Tentative schedule—Thursday evening, Sept. 13: "Concerto Barocco," "Age of Anxiety," "Sylvia: Pas de Deux," and "Cakewalk." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Sept. 14: "Illuminations," "Orpheus," "Pas de Trois," and "La Valse." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Sept. 15: "Jinx," "Mother Goose Suite," "The Duel," and "Firebird." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Sept. 15: "Concerto Barocco," "The Miraculous Mandarin," "Sylvia: Pas de Deux," and "Bourrée Fantasque." . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, Sept. 16: "The Duel," "Card Game," "A la Françaix," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ Sunday evening, Sept. 16: "Serenade," "Prodigal Son," "Pas de Trois," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, Sept. 18: "The Duel," "Orpheus," "Pas de Trois," and "Cakewalk." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, Sept. 19: "Serenade," "Prodigal Son," "The Cage," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Sept. 20: "Symphonie Concertante," "The Miraculous Mandarin," "Sylvia: Pas de Deux," and "La Valse." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Sept. 21: "Card Game," "Apollo, Leader of the Muses," "The Cage," and "Firebird." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Sept. 22: "Concerto Barocco," "Age of Anxiety," "The Duel," and "La Valse." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Sept. 22: "Card Game," "Prodigal Son," "Pas de Trois," and "Bourrée Fantasque." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. CI 6-8989. Evenings at 8:30. Matinées at 2:30. Through Sunday, Sept. 23.)

Ballet Theatre—Opening performances of an engagement that will run through Sunday, Oct. 7—Thursday evening, Sept. 20: "Giselle," "Le Jeune Homme et la Mort," and "Interplay." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Sept. 21: "Les Sylphides," "Princess Aurora," "Le Jeune Homme et la Mort," and "Rodeo." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Sept. 22: "Les Sylphides," "Peter and the Wolf," and "Princess Aurora." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Sept. 22: "Concerto," "Fall River Legend," "L'Amour et Son Amour," and "Interplay." (Metropolitan Opera House. BR 9-3135. Evenings at 8:30. Matinées at 2:30.)

NIGHT LIFE

(Some places at which you will find music or other entertainment. They are open every evening, except as indicated.)

DINNER, SUPPER, AND DANCING

Ambassador, Park Ave. at 51st St. (PL 5-1000)—Dancing, except on Sundays, in the elegant sunken Garden to the soothing murmurs of Jules Lande's orchestra at dinner and supper.

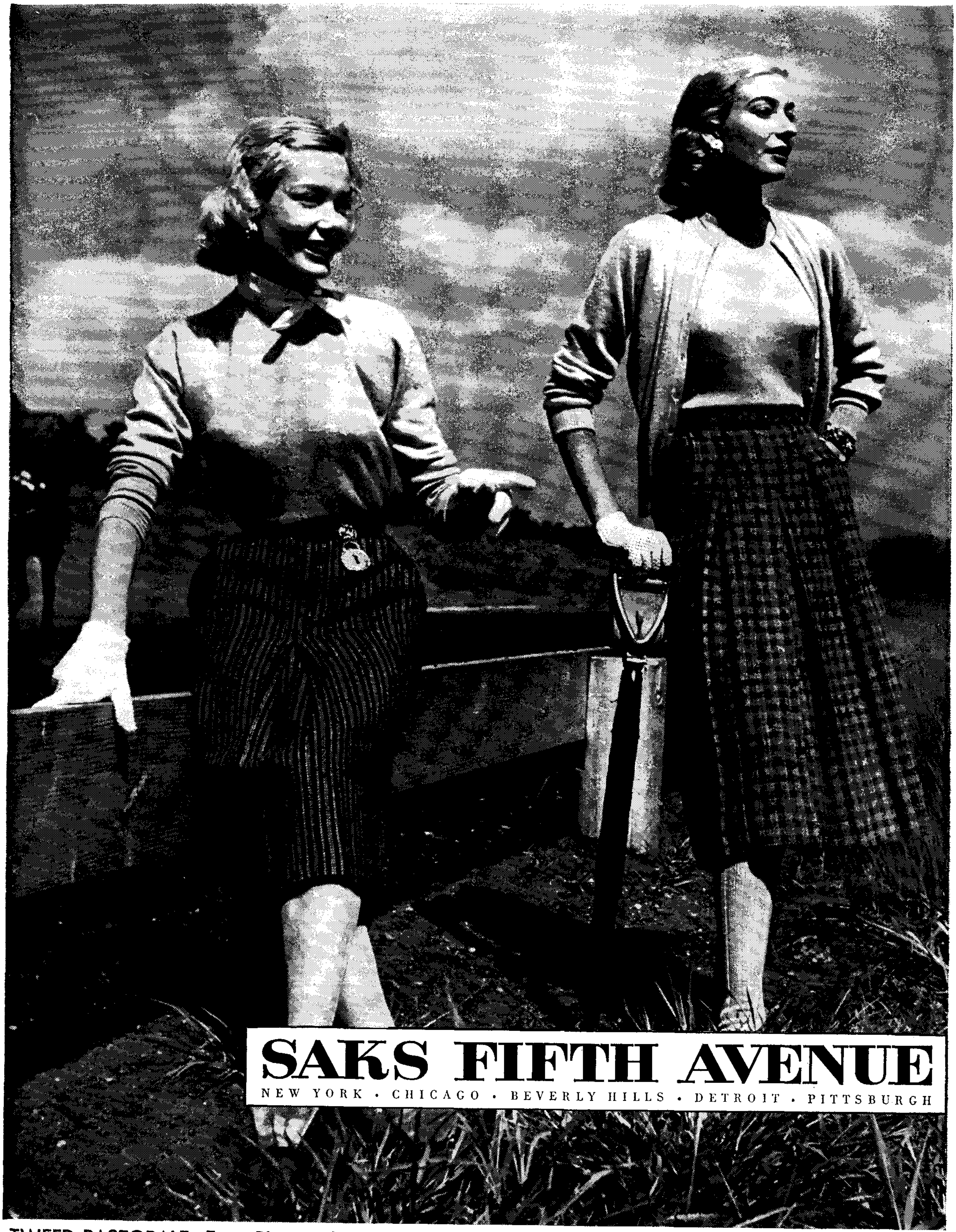
Biltmore, Madison Ave. at 43rd St. (MU 7-7000)—A covey of violinists appears "under the clock" at cocktail time and in the Madison Room (which is closed Sundays) at dinnertime. No dancing anywhere, and not a peep out of the gang on the Day of Rest.

Carlton House, Madison Ave. at 61st St. (TE 8-3000)—The main reminder of the late lamented Ritz's Oval Room is Emery Deutsch's band, now billeted in the restaurant here, where it makes nostalgic dinner music, except on Sundays. No dancing.

Gogi's Larue, 45 E. 58th St. (EL 5-6374)—Any number of epicurean delights, not the least of which is Ted Straeter's irresistible invitation to the dance. His men and Pancho's rumba band open fire at nine-thirty. In the handsome new lounge, George Feyer's piano music starts at eight. Closed Mondays.

El Morocco, 154 E. 54th St. (EL 5-8769)—

The New Yorker, published weekly by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 25 W. 43rd St., New York 18, N. Y. R. H. Fleischmann, president; E. R. Spaulding and R. H. Truax, vice-presidents; S. B. Botsford, treasurer; M. L. Fries, secretary; R. B. Bowen, advertising director. Vol. XXVII, No. 31, Sept. 15, 1951. Entered as second-class matter, February 10, 1925, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Copyright, 1951, by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., in the United States and Canada. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of The New Yorker. Printed in U. S. A. Subscription rates: U. S. and possessions, 1 year $7.00; Philippines, Latin America, and Spain, $7.50; Canada, $8.00; Other Foreign, $10.00.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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

If only there were a ticker in the lobby, most of the customers would never even have to go to work. Chauncey Gray's orchestra and Chiquito's rumba band for dancing.

NEW YORKER, Eighth Ave. at 34th St. (LO 3-1000)—In the Terrace Room, there's an ice show twice an evening. Dance music by Bernie Cummins' band. Closed Sundays.

PIERRE, Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (TE 8-8000)—The Cotillion Room will reopen Tuesday, Sept. 18, as a sounding board for Yma Sumac's four-octave larynx. Artini and Consuelo will prance, and Stanley Melba's orchestra and Chico-Relli's rumba band will do dance music....¶ Every night, Stanley Worth's quartet plays for dancing from cocktails through supper in the Café Pierre.

PLAZA, Fifth Ave. at 58th St. (PL 9-3000)—The Rendez-Vous Room, a reminder of the days when life was more serene, is full of Maximillian Bergere's and Nicolas Matthey's dance music after eight-thirty....¶ The Palm Court has Leo LeFleur's music during the cocktail hour. No dancing.

ROOSEVELT, Madison Ave. at 45th St. (MU 6-9200)—Mark Monte and his Continentals are the major source of dance music in the Grill at dinner and supper. Closed Sundays.

ST. REGIS, Fifth Ave. at 55th St. (PL 3-4500)—In the sumptuous Maisonette, there's Julie Wilson, a happy-go-lucky morning-glory, cavorting through some reasonably broadminded ballads. The dance bands of Horace Diaz and Milt Shaw tinkle away betweentimes. Closed Sundays.

SAVOY-PLAZA, Fifth Ave. at 59th St. (EL 5-2600)—Every afternoon and evening, Irving Conn's orchestra supplies the clientele of the Café Lounge with music to dance to.

STATLER, Seventh Ave. at 33rd St. (PE 6-5000)—Dancing in the Café Rouge, during dinner and supper to Russ Morgan's big band. Closed Sundays.

STORK CLUB, 3 E. 53rd St. (PL 3-1940)—If your problems are little ones, you're more than likely to find them dancing their young hearts out here almost any evening. Closed Sundays.

TAVERN-ON-THE-GREEN, Central Park W. at 67th St. (SC 4-8100)—The quickest way of getting out of town. Weatherman permitting, there's dancing under the trees as well as simple communing with nature.

VERSAILLES, 151 E. 50th St. (PL 8-0310)—Basically Broadway, but a pretty good Broadway. Emile Petti's and Panchito's bands play for dancing after nine, and someone from Hollywood named John Carroll warbles.

WALDORF-ASTORIA, Park Ave. at 49th St. (EL 5-3000)—At dinner and supper on the Starlight Roof, there is Vaughn Monroe, the well-known public-address system, and his orchestra, plus Mischa Borr's band. Sundays, Mr. Borr's band plays by itself until twelve.

NOTE—The Rainbow Room, an outsize polo field with tables, is open for cocktails and listening music from four-thirty to nine every evening except Sunday. The best seats are in the bleachers, up near the windows. The address is 30 Rockefeller Plaza, the telephone CI 6-5800.

SMALL AND CHEERFUL

(No dancing, unless noted.)

LE COQ ROUGE, 65 E. 56th St. (PL 3-8887): Eddie Davis, whose band has launched a thousand débutantes, holds forth here after eight-thirty. Phil D'Arcy's trio makes dance music, too. Closed Sundays.... **TONI'S CAPRICE,** 112 E. 52nd St. (PL 3-6255): This airy pleasure dome is dedicated principally to the inner man, but it also affords, after nine, Alex Fogarty's pianoforte excursions into the milder classics. Closed Saturdays and Sundays.... **LITTLE CLUB,** 70 E. 55th St. (PL 3-9425): A determined throwback to the social habits and concepts of the Noble Experiment. After ten, except Sundays, the Sonny Kendis Trio gallops for dear life through its repertoire.... **ARMANDO'S,** 54 E. 55th St. (PL

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

3-0760): A well-stocked hunting ground for those who love old familiar faces. Piano and violin after nine-thirty. Closed Sundays. . . . **EL CHICO,** 80 Grove St., at Sheridan Sq. (CH 2-4646): Good-natured Latin-American fun, accompanied by impassioned singing and almost as fervent dance music. Closed Mondays. . . . **NINO,** 10 E. 52nd St. (PL 3-9014): The bar of this Byzantine boudoir has Harry Meyerowitz providing cocktail piano and Rudy Timfield providing dinner and supper piano. Closed Sundays. . . . **CELESTE,** 28 W. 56th St. (JU 6-9063): Jim Mahoney gets off a nice job at his piano after nine. Closed Sundays. . . . **DRAKE ROOM,** 71 E. 56th St. (PL 5-0600): Addison Bailey addresses himself to the local Steinway at dinner and supper, except Sundays.

BIG AND BRASSY

(Dancing, unless otherwise noted.)

COPACABANA, 10 E. 60th St. (PL 8-1060): Joe E. Lewis, a homespun philosopher with a distinctly urban attitude. There's a lot more show, too, but that's not the point. . . . **RIVIERA,** Fort Lee, N.J. (Fort Lee 8-2000): Lena Horne, in fine fettle and feathers, giving her love songs that old Circe treatment. Also, an excellent view of the George Washington Bridge and any number of our best-known horseplayers. . . . **LATIN QUARTER,** Broadway at 48th St. (CI 6-1737): Billy Daniels, vibrating like one of the Fall River boats rounding Point Judith, will start singing about that Old Black Magic and other interesting love potions on Sunday, Sept. 16. François and Giselle Szony, who are already there, will go on whipping up some picturesque and agile adagio work. Aside from a few examples of the French dollmaker's art, the rest of the show is the standard recipe for hash.

SUPPER CLUBS

(No dancing, unless noted.)

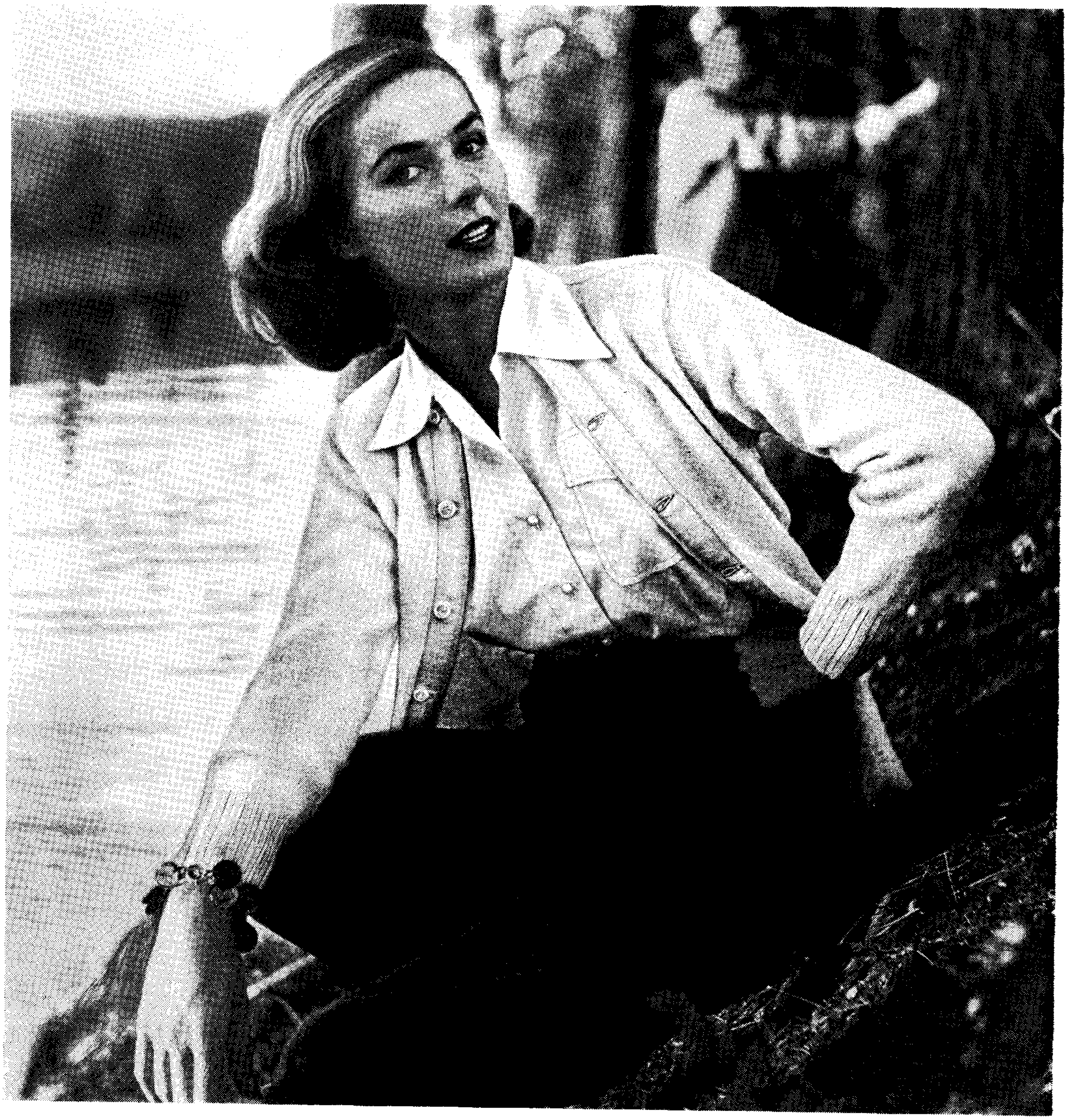
BLUE ANGEL, 152 E. 55th St. (PL 3-5998): A pretty impressive battle of wits; i.e., Odette Myrtil, saucy proof that old soubrettes never fade away; Doodles and the Spider, lampooning other performers' pet recordings; Orson Bean, an after-dinner speaker with an odd turn of mind. Not only that, but the blithe ballads of Barbara Cook and the music of Stuart Ross and Ellis Larkin's trio. . . . **LE RUBAN BLEU,** 4 E. 56th St. (PL 3-6426): Ronny Graham, court jester of the Duchy of Dementia, and the Three Riffs, whose songs have a high humor content. There's also pretty music by Julius Monk and the Norman Paris Trio, as well as the ditties of Mary Mayo, who is very new, very earnest. Closed Sundays. . . . **VILLAGE VANGUARD,** 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (CH 2-9355): Shoshana Damari, a young lady with an arresting voice, and George Hopkins, a budding comedian. Clarence Williams' trio, which has Karl Lynch on guitar, plays real gone dance music. Closed Mondays. . . . **ONE FIFTH AVENUE,** Fifth Ave. at 8th St. (SP 7-7000): Bibi Osterwald, whose arias are well sprinkled with laughing matter, is the main bout here. There's also double piano by Bob Downey and Harold Fonville, and solo piano by Hazel Webster. Ancient movies Sunday nights. . . . **BYLINE ROOM,** 137 E. 52nd St. (PL 3-4759): Except Sundays, Mabel Mercer is in her nest right over the rowdydow Show Spot bar, singing her praises of the world's oldest emotion. Sam Hamilton is at the piano. . . . **BON SOIR,** 40 W. 8th St. (OR 4-0531): The vociferous Mae Barnes, making hot mince pie out of the average torch song while Garland Wilson and Norene Tate evoke raucous music from their baby grands. Jimmie Daniels' ballads are more romantic, and the ones tossed off by Alice Ghostley and G. Wood are generally sheer nonsense. Closed Mondays.

MOSTLY FOR MUSIC

(No dancing, unless noted.)

EDDIE CONDON'S, 47 W. 3rd St. (GR 5-8639): An unrestrained riot staged by Wild Bill Davison, Cutty Cutshall, Buzzy Drootin, Ed-

Peck and Peck



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

mond Hall, Bob Casey, Gene Schroeder, and Mr. Condon. Ralph Sutton does the interlude solo-piano work, a fine demonstration of fifty-finger exercises. Tuesday nights, when other sharpshooters drop in, are often complete bedlam. Closed Sundays. . . . THE EMBERS, 161 E. 54th St. (PL 9-3228): Some of the best music on the North American continent is being turned loose by Bobby Hackett's peppery sextet (Vic Dickenson and Gene Sedric are also involved) and the prankish Red Norvo Trio (Tal Farlow on guitar and Charles Mingus on bass). Closed Sundays. . . . NICK'S, Seventh Ave. S. at 10th St. (CH 2-6683): Pee Wee Erwin's band is clattering along here. Sunday afternoon is jam-session time. Closed Mondays. . . . JIMMY RYAN'S, 53 W. 52nd St. (EL 5-9600): Jimmy Archey, aided by Henry Goodwin, Pops Foster, Benny Waters, Tommy Benford, and Dick Wellstood, is in residence. Don Frye is at the piano between sets. Jam sessions Monday nights; closed Sundays. . . . BIRDLAND, 1678 Broadway, at 52nd St. (JU 6-1368): Erroll Garner's trio will be romping about until Thursday, Sept. 20, when Dizzy Gillespie will start shrilling. Jam sessions Monday nights. . . . STUYVESANT CASINO, 140 Second Ave., at 9th St. (GR 3-5289): Those Friday-night rent parties are still going on. On Sept. 14, the main contestants in the high-pressure division will be George Wettling, Max Kaminsky, Yank Lawsen, Lou McGarity, Bud Freeman, Pee Wee Russell, Wild Bill Davison, Bob Haggart, and Red Allen. And who could ask for anything more? . . . CENTRAL PLAZA, 111 Second Ave., at 6th St. (AL 4-9800): Another Friday-night barbecue, this week (Sept. 14) offering such nourishing vitamins as Billy Butterfield, Bobby Sherwood, Peanuts Hucko, Willie the Lion Smith, Big Chief Russell Moore, and the Dixieland Rhythm Kings of Dayton, Ohio. Dancing.

DINNER IN THE COUNTRY

(Places to dine while out motoring. Telephoning ahead is always wise; a few places insist on it. No dancing, unless noted.)

BANKSVILLE, N.Y.: La Crémaillère (Bedford Village 4-9311); closed Mondays. . . . BETHPAGE, L.I.: Beau Sejour (HIcksville 3-0091); closed Tuesdays. . . . CITY ISLAND, N.Y.: Ryan's (CIty Island 8-9807); dancing on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday evenings. . . . ¶ Thwaite's (CIty Island 8-1023); dancing on Friday and Saturday evenings. . . . CONGERS, N.Y.: Jean's (Congers 8-6178); closed Mondays. . . . DANBURY, CONN.: White Turkey Inn (Danbury 3-2726). . . . EAST NORWICH, L.I.: Rothmann's Inn (OYster Bay 6-0266). . . . FISHKILL, N.Y.: Boni's Inn (Beacon 167); closed Mondays. . . . ¶ Gertrude Hart's (Beacon 979). . . . GARRISON, N.Y.: Bird and Bottle (Garrison 4-3342); closed Mondays and Tuesdays. . . . GLENWOOD LANDING, L.I.: Swan Club (ROslyn 3-0037); dancing every evening except Monday. . . . HARTSDALE, N.Y.: Tordo's (WHite Plains 8-0597). . . . HUNTINGTON, L.I.: René's (Huntington 4-2309); closed Tuesdays. . . . LAKE SUCCESS, L.I.: Mori's (GReat Neck 2-3600); closed Tuesdays. . . . NORWALK, CONN.: Silvermine Tavern (Norwalk 6-2588). . . . ¶ Stirrup-Cup (Norwalk 6-5044); dancing on Saturday evenings. . . . PORT WASHINGTON, L.I.: Nino's (POrt Washington 7-1604); dancing on Friday and Saturday evenings. . . . ¶ Riviera (POrt Washington 7-0354); dancing on Friday and Saturday evenings. . . . POUND RIDGE, N.Y.: Emily Shaw's Inn (Pound Ridge 4-9371); closed Mondays. . . . RIDGEFIELD, CONN.: Stonehenge (Ridgefield 6-6511); Peter Walters at the piano, except Mondays. . . . ¶ Fox Hill, on Route 7 between Ridgefield and Danbury (Ridgefield 6-7628). . . . ¶ Hearthstone Outpost Inn (Ridgefield 6-7613). . . . ROSLYN, L.I.: Blue Spruce Inn (ROslyn 3-3300); closed Mondays. . . . SMITHTOWN, L.I.: Frank Friede's Riverside Inn (Smithtown 1016); closed Tuesdays. . . . ¶ Mont d'Or Inn (Smithtown 1997); closed Mondays. . . . SOUTH HUNTINGTON, L.I.: Round Hill (Huntington 1371); closed Mondays. . . . SYOSSET, L.I.: Villa Victor (SYosset 6-1706). . . . TARRYTOWN, N.Y.: Tappan Hill (TArrytown 4-3031); dancing on Friday and Saturday evenings. . . . WESTBURY, L.I.: Westbury Manor

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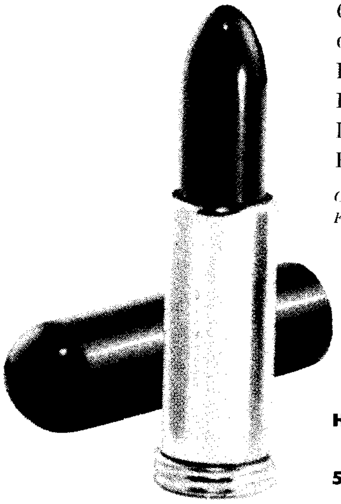

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open weekdays from around 10 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES

DAUMIER AND DELACROIX—A compact, well-selected array of oils, water colors, and other works by these two nineteenth-century contemporaries. (Wildenstein, 19 E. 64th St.; through Sept. 29.)

SIAMESE SCULPTURES—An exhibition of pieces dating from the ninth through the fifteenth centuries. (Carlebach, 937 Third Ave., at 56th St.; through Oct. 27.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the BABCOCK, 38 E. 57th St.: Water colors by contemporary American artists, among them Jacob Getlar Smith, Jean Liberte, and Henry Botkin; through Sept. 29. . . . DOWNTOWN, 32 E. 51st St.: Drawings, varied in subject matter, by Stuart Davis, Charles Sheeler, Reuben Tam, and others; through Sept. 22. . . . FEIGL, 601 Madison Ave., at 57th St.: James Ensor, Raoul Dufy, Vaclav Vytlacil, and other European and American moderns, in a showing of oils; through Sept. 29. . . . MILCH, 55 E. 57th St.: Oils and water colors by nineteenth- and twentieth-century Americans, including Childe Hassam, Ernest Lawson, and Stephen Etnier; through Sept. 28. Closed Saturdays. . . . NEW ART CIRCLE, 41 E. 57th St.: Oils by Paul Klee, Randall Morgan, Max Beckmann, and other moderns; through Sept. 29. . . . NEW GALLERY, 63 W. 44th St.: Paintings and pastels by Kimber Smith, Seong Moy, Joan Mitchell, and other gallery members. Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 7; Saturdays, 10 to 4; through Sept. 15. . . . PERLS, 32 E. 58th St.: Works by such modern French artists as Modigliani, Braque, Matisse, and Léger; through Sept. 29. Closed Saturdays. . . . ROSENBERG, 16 E. 57th St.: Oils by French and American artists, including Picasso, Braque, Max Weber, and Karl Knaths; through Sept. 28. Closed Saturdays. . . . VIVIANO, 42 E. 57th St.: A show of oils and sculptures, comprising works by Kay Sage, Carlyle Brown, Renato Birolli, and other Americans and Italians; through Sept. 28. Closed Saturdays.

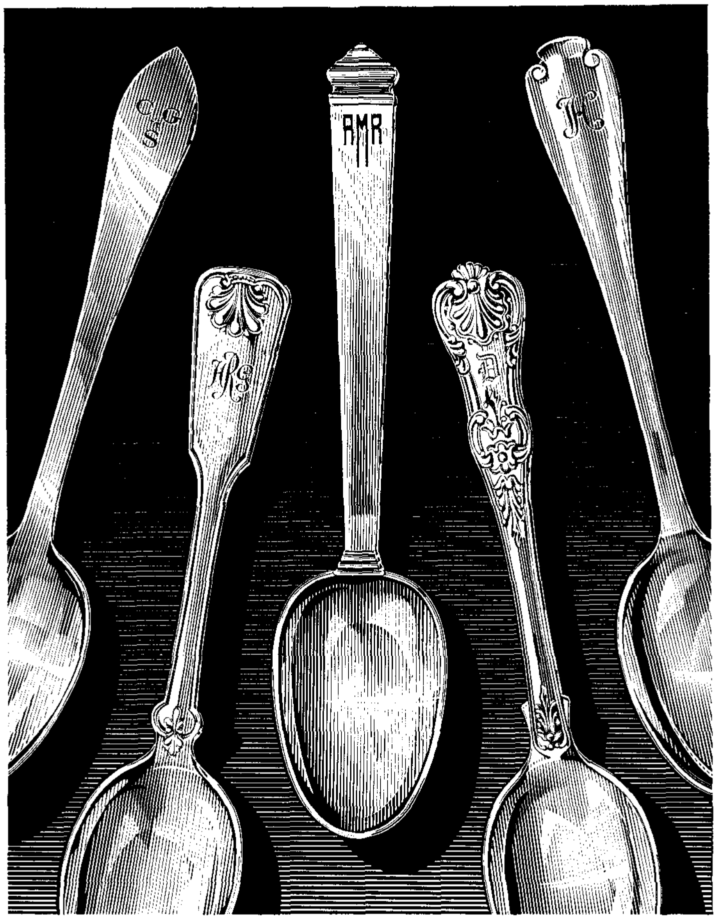
SOME OF THIS WEEK'S OPENINGS—At the A.C.A., 63 E. 57th St.: Group show by living Americans; through Sept. 22. . . . ARGENT, 42 W. 57th St.: Annual exhibition by the National Association of Women Artists; through Sept. 22. . . . ASSOCIATED AMERICAN ARTISTS, 711 Fifth Ave., at 55th St.: Group of little-known artists sponsored by gallery artists; through Sept. 29. . . . BORGENICHT, 65 E. 57th St.: Contemporary American group; through Sept. 24. . . . GRAND CENTRAL, 15 Vanderbilt Ave., at 43rd St.: Laurence Blair; through Sept. 21. Closed Saturdays. . . . HELLER, 108 E. 57th St.: Edith Bry; through Sept. 22. . . . KOOTZ, 600 Madison Ave., at 57th St.: Group showing by abstract Expressionists; through Sept. 29. . . . LEVITT, 559 Madison Ave., at 56th St.: David Young; through Sept. 29. Closed Saturday, Sept. 15. . . . MIDTOWN, 17 E. 57th St.: Opening exhibition in the gallery's new quarters; through Sept. 29. . . . DE NAGY, 206 E. 53rd St.: Pennerton West; through Sept. 29. . . . NIVEAU, 63 E. 57th St.: Modern French group; through Oct. 4. . . . PASSEDOIT, 121 E. 57th St.: B. J. O. Nordfeldt; through Sept. 29. . . . PERIDOT, 6 E. 12th St.: American group; through Oct. 6. . . . WELLONS, 70 E. 56th St.: Sidnee Livingston. Weekdays, 10 to 6, and Friday evenings until 8; through Sept. 22.

NOTE—The semiannual exhibit in Washington Square is on view daily, starting at noon and continuing until dark; through Sunday, Oct. 7.

MUSEUMS

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—Prints of Parisian scenes and personalities by Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Dufy, Villon, and other French artists; through Sept. 16. . . . ¶ Japanese prints and paintings, mainly by nineteenth-century artists; through Oct. 14. . . . ¶ A display of portrait photographs, 1830-1930, including examples by Thomas Eakins, Man Ray, and Alfred Stieglitz; through

Exclusive with Tiffany are these beautiful sterling silver flatware patterns. Heavier than most, they are often a bride's most cherished possession.



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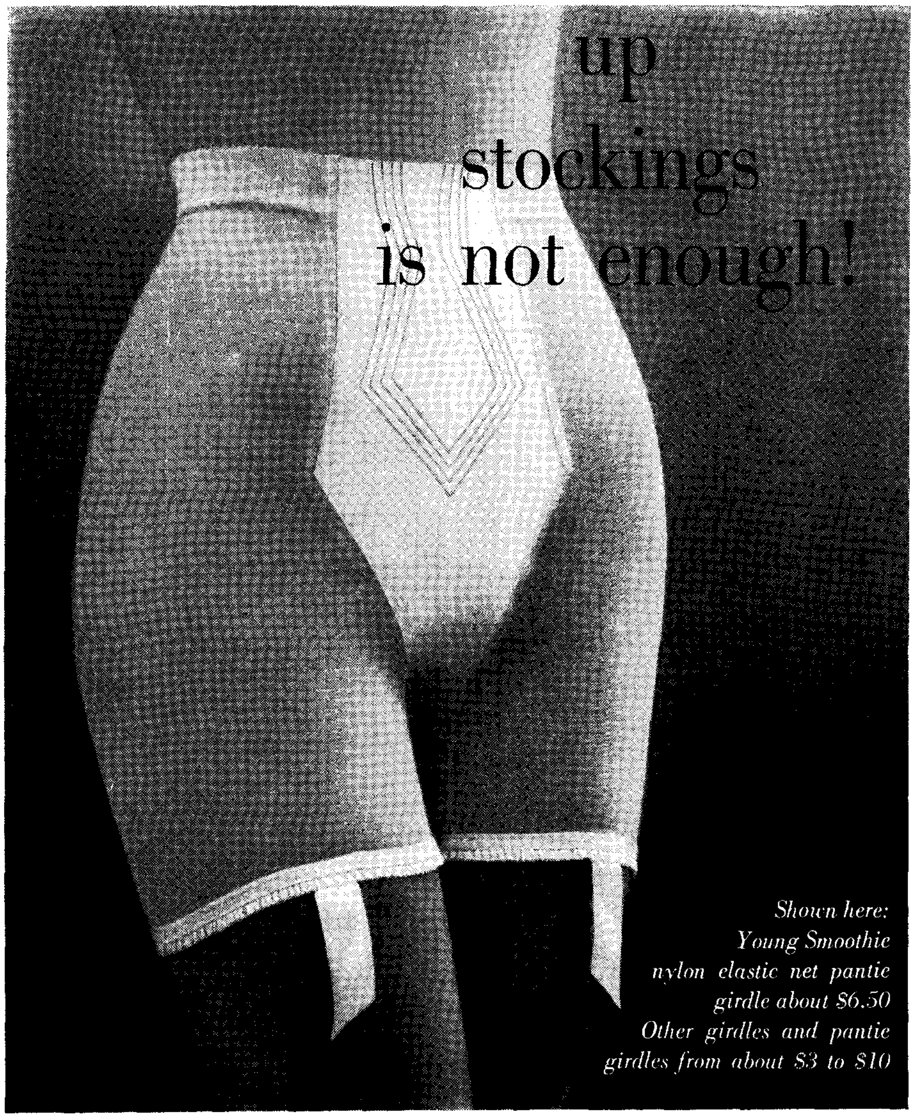

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Oct. 14. (Weekdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

JEWISH MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—Oils and pastels, mostly on Biblical subjects, by the late German artist Lesser Ury, plus an exhibition of children's paintings, sponsored by the Jewish Education Committee of New York. (Mondays through Thursdays, 3 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Seventy of Winslow Homer's water colors, drawings, and prints; through Sept. 16. . . . ¶ Prints and drawings by Toulouse-Lautrec; starting Sept. 21. (Weekdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—An exhibit of eight European and American cars, among them a 1931 Mercedes, a 1949 M.G., and a 1951 Army jeep, chosen as examples of the well-designed automobile. (Weekdays, noon to 7; Sundays, 1 to 7; through Nov. 11.)

MUSEUM OF NON-OBJECTIVE PAINTING, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—Currently on display here are recent acquisitions: paintings by such men as Moholy-Nagy, Kandinsky, Mondrian, Vantongerloo, and Delaunay, plus a Pevsner construction and other items. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6; through Sept. 30.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM, 10 W. 8th St.—The Museum's first show of the season is a selection of paintings, sculptures, and drawings from its permanent collection. (Daily, except Mondays, 1 to 5; through Sept. 30.)

MUSIC

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC—Ella Fitzgerald, Gene Krupa, Illinois Jacquet, Oscar Peterson, Roy Eldridge, Lester Young, Flip Phillips, and others beating it out. (Carnegie Hall. CI 7-7460. Saturday, Sept. 15, at midnight. . . . ¶ Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. ST 3-6700. Tuesday, Sept. 18, at 8:30.)

SPORTS

BASEBALL—At **YANKEE STADIUM:** Yankees vs. Detroit, Thursday and Friday, Sept. 13-14, at 2:30, and Saturday, Sept. 15, at 2. . . . ¶ Yankees vs. Cleveland, Sunday, Sept. 16, at 2:05, and Monday, Sept. 17, at 2:30. . . . ¶ Yankees vs. Chicago, Tuesday, Sept. 18, at 8:30, and Thursday, Sept. 20, at 2:30. . . . **POLO GROUNDS:** Giants vs. Boston, Saturday, Sept. 22, at 1:30. . . . **EBBETS FIELD:** Dodgers vs. Philadelphia, Friday and Saturday, Sept. 21-22, at 8:30.

BOXING—Eugene Hairston vs. Harold Green, middleweights, 10 rounds. (Madison Square Garden. Friday, Sept. 14. Preliminaries at 8:30; main bout at 10.)

COLLEGE FOOTBALL—Saturday, Sept. 22—Harvard vs. Springfield, at Cambridge, at 2:30. . . . ¶ Yale vs. Bates, at New Haven, at 2.

PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL—Giants vs. Los Angeles Rams; an exhibition game for the benefit of the *Herald Tribune* Fresh Air Fund. (Polo Grounds. Thursday, Sept. 20, at 8:30.)

GOLF—U.S.G.A. Amateur Championship. (Saucon Valley Country Club, Bethlehem, Pa. Through Saturday, Sept. 15.) . . . ¶ Metropolitan Golf Association Open Championship. (Forest Hill Field Club, Bloomfield, N.J. Tuesday through Thursday, Sept. 18-20.)

HORSE SHOW—Piping Rock Horse Show. (Locust Valley, L.I. Thursday through Saturday, Sept. 13-15.)

HUNT RACING—Radnor Hunt Club. (Malvern, Pa. Saturday, Sept. 15.) . . . ¶ Whitemarsh Valley Hunt Club. (Flourtown, Pa. Saturday, Sept. 22.)

POLO—Sundays at 3:30—**BLIND BROOK POLO CLUB,** Purchase. . . . **MEADOW BROOK CLUB,** Westbury. A match in the East-West Championship, Sept. 16.

RACING—At Aqueduct: Weekdays at 1:15, through Saturday, Sept. 22. The Edgemere Handicap, Saturday, Sept. 15; the Cowdin, Wednesday, Sept. 19; and the Beldame Handicap, Saturday, Sept. 22. (Frequent trains leave Penn Station Mondays through Fridays between 10:45 and 1, and Saturdays between 10:45 and 1:25.)

SPORTS-CAR ROAD RACING—The annual whizzer

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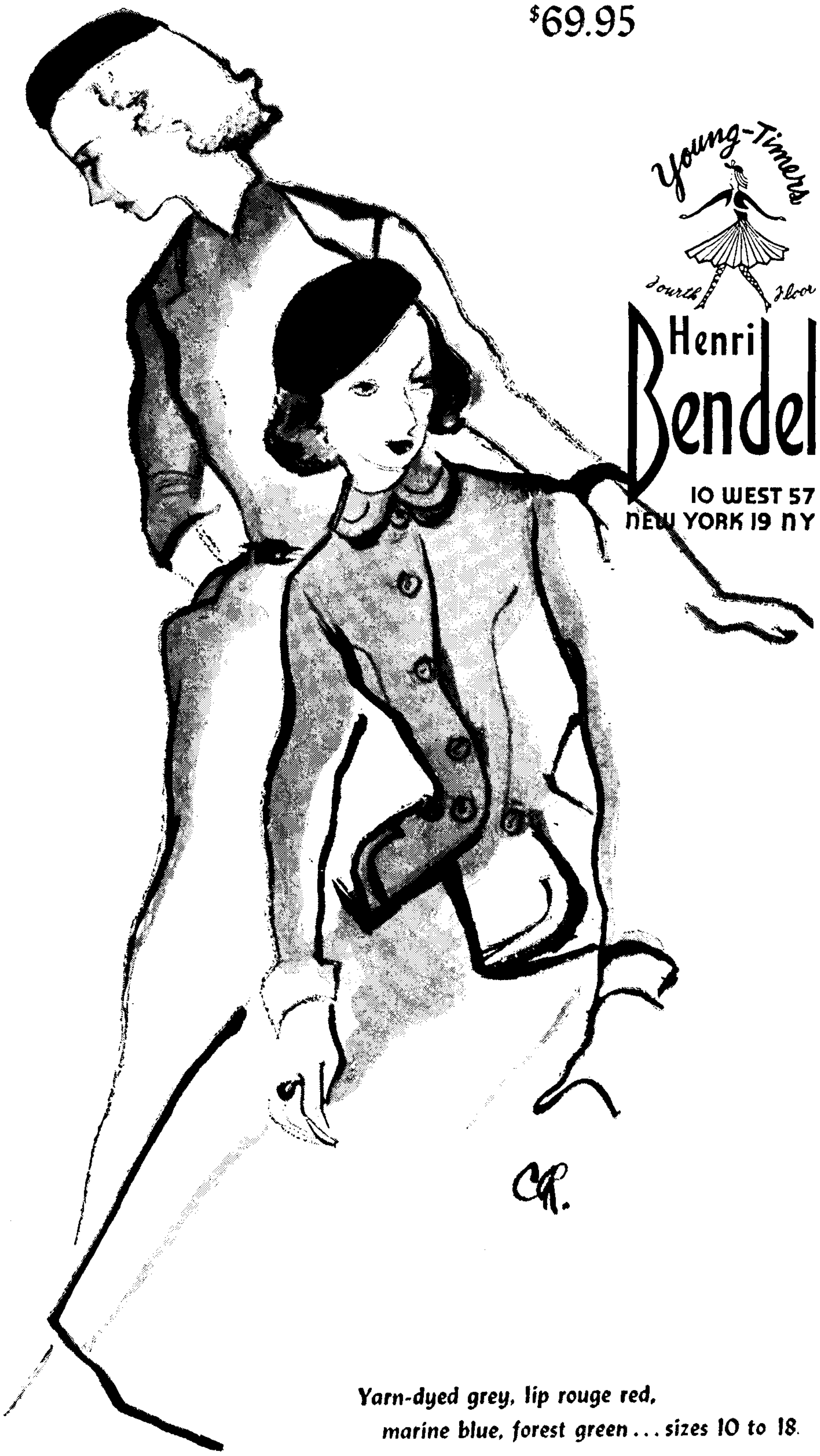

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in, through, up, down, and around Watkins Glen. Four contests are scheduled—the International Grand Prix, the Queen Catherine Montour Cup Race, the Seneca Cup Race, and the Glen Trophy. (Watkins Glen, N.Y. Saturday, Sept. 15. First race starts at 10 A.M.)

TROTTING—At ROOSEVELT RACEWAY, Westbury: Weekdays at 8:40; through Saturday, Sept. 22. (Trains leave Penn Station for the track at 6:49 and 7:04.) . . . SARATOGA RACEWAY, Saratoga Springs: Weekdays at 8:15; through Saturday, Oct. 13.

OTHER EVENTS

UNITED NATIONS—The organization is currently in the throes of transferring all operations from Flushing Meadow to Manhattan, but if you call PLaza 4-1234, Ext. 634, you may catch an open meeting, at Flushing Meadow, of the Security Council, the Commission on Conventional Armaments, the Atomic Energy Commission, or the Interim Committee of the General Assembly. Be sure to call the day before you want to go. Questions about the United Nations will be answered by the Information Center for the United Nations, 220 W. 45th St., JU 2-0233.

MINEOLA FAIR—Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles, not to mention baton twirling, ox pulling, horseshoe pitching, sheepdog herding, puppet shows, fireworks, antique vehicles, rodeo, square dancing, concerts, spinning demonstrations, and exhibits of pheasants, pigs, peacocks, and Lord knows what else. (Fair Grounds, Mineola. Daily, 10 A.M. to 11 P.M.; through Saturday, Sept. 15.)

FLOWER SHOW—The annual display of dahlias, presented by the American Dahlia Society in coöperation with the Horticultural Society of New York. (Essex House, 157 W. 58th St. Tuesday, Sept. 18, from 3 to 9:30, and Wednesday, Sept. 19, from 10 to 10.)

HAYDEN PLANETARIUM—The program for September includes the main show, "Exploring the Constellations," as well as a special demonstration of how the annular eclipse of September 1st occurred. (Central Park W. at 81st St. Mondays through Fridays at 2, 3:30, and 8:30. Saturdays and Sundays at 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8:30. Extra performances Saturday mornings at 11.)

AUCTION—Paintings, including works by Hobbema, Reynolds, and de Chirico, as well as English and other furniture and objects of art, from the collections of John Miles Thompson and others. (Kende Galleries, 119 W. 57th St. Exhibition Thursday and Friday, Sept. 13-14, from 10 to 5:30. Auction Saturday, Sept. 15, at 2.)

•

NOTE—Volunteers are still sorely needed in each of the city's civil-defense departments, among which are Transportation, Medical Emergency, Public Health, Public Welfare, and the Fire and Police Auxiliaries. Telephone operators, messengers, air wardens, hospital aids, clerical workers, and such are wanted to fill jobs in nearly a hundred and fifty different categories. Some of these posts involve technical or professional skills, but for most of them the qualifications are merely time, heart, and, possibly, muscle. All hospitals, precinct police stations, and district firehouses are prepared to take applications, and additional recruiting centers have been opened in motion-picture theatres, libraries, and other public buildings. Further information can be had from the five borough recruiting offices: 500 Park Ave., at 59th St. (MU 8-6940), in Manhattan; 2 Court St. (MAin 4-7681), in Brooklyn; Borough Hall, 120-55 Queens Blvd. (BOulevard 3-2324), in Queens; Bronx County Court House, 161st St. and Grand Concourse (LUdlow 8-9634), in the Bronx; and Borough Hall, St. George, S.I. (GIbraltar 2-8836), in Richmond. . . . ¶ Blood donations for the armed forces are, of course, also urgently sought. To make an appointment call the Manhattan Red Cross Chapter, 70 W. 40th St., MU 9-1000, or the Brooklyn Chapter, 57 Willoughby St., MAin 4-6001.

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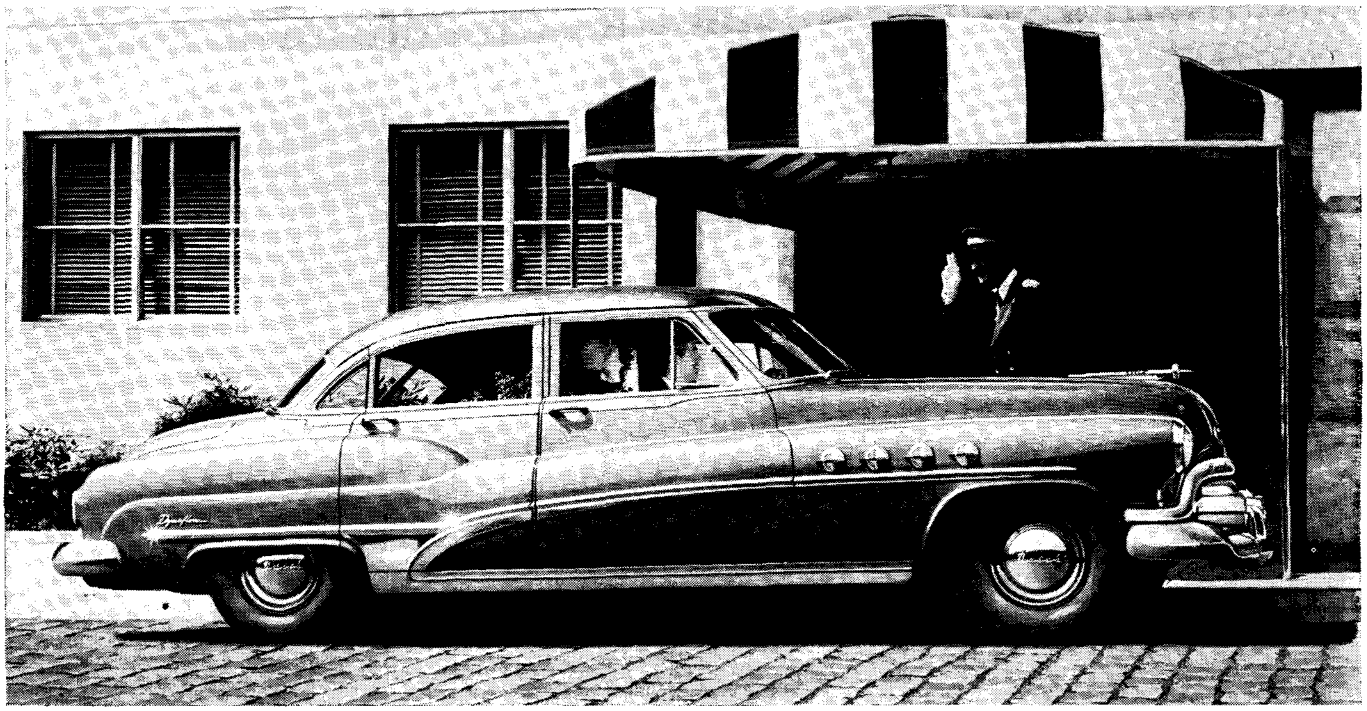

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

MOTION PICTURES

FILMS OF MORE THAN ROUTINE INTEREST ARE DESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION

Bitter Rice—Extravagantly active ladies in the rice fields of the Po Valley. An Italian film, in which Silvana Mangano is outstanding as the most tempestuous of the harvesters. (Academy of Music, 126 E. 14th, GR 7-9653; R.K.O. 58th St., 3rd Ave. at 58th, EL 5-3577; R.K.O. 86th St., Lexington at 86th, AT 9-8900; R.K.O. 23rd St., 8th Ave. at 23rd, CH 2-3440; Nemo, B'way at 110th, AC 2-9406; and Coliseum, B'way at 181st, WA 7-7200; Sept. 17-19.)

Four in a Jeep—A multilingual film, most of it in English, describing the activities of a patrol in the International Zone of Vienna. The patrol includes an American, a Russian, an Englishman, and a Frenchman. Although not entirely satisfactory, the picture contains a compelling scene portraying the homecoming of Austrian prisoners of war. With Ralph Meeker and Viveca Lindfors. (Carlton, B'way at 100th, AC 2-3862; Sept. 13.)

The Great Caruso—There aren't many biographical facts in this alleged account of the great man's life, but there is a spate of good music, sung, for the most part, by Mario Lanza, who has an agreeable voice, and by Dorothy Kirsten and Blanche Thebom, who also sound fine. (Waverly, 6th Ave. at 3rd, WA 9-8038; Sept. 13. . . . ¶ 8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th, GR 7-7874; through Sept. 14. . . . ¶ Murray Hill, Park at 42nd, MU 2-1431; and Terrace, 9th Ave. at 23rd, CH 2-9280; through Sept. 15. . . . ¶ Plaza, 42 E. 58th, EL 5-3320; through Sept. 17. . . . ¶ Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd, GR 5-1660; through Sept. 18. . . . ¶ Trans-Lux 85th St., Madison at 85th, BU 8-3180; Sept. 15-18. . . . ¶ Trans-Lux Colony, 2nd Ave. at 79th, BU 8-9468; starting Sept. 19.)

Marie du Port—The effect a village barmaid exercises on a middle-aged and bored big-city fellow. Jean Gabin is very good as the urban gentleman in this diverting French film. (Art, 36 E. 8th, GR 3-7014; through Sept. 19, tentative.)

Oliver Twist—A British adaptation of Dickens' story of poverty and greed in nineteenth-century England, turned out by Robert Neame and David Lean, who were also responsible for "Great Expectations." Though not as distinguished as its predecessor, it has fine characterizations by Alec Guinness, as Fagin, and John Howard Davies, as Oliver. (Park Avenue, Park at 59th, PL 9-7241.)

Operation Disaster—An English film about a submarine that goes to its doom on a practice run in the North Sea. Exciting, but not for claustrophobes. John Mills is in command of the unfortunate craft. (York, 1st Ave. at 64th, RH 4-9350; Sept. 16-17. . . . ¶ Gracie Square, 1st Ave. at 89th, SA 2-2478; Sept. 18-19.)

A Place in the Sun—An adaptation of Theodore Dreiser's "An American Tragedy" that rates a blue ribbon. Astutely directed by George Stevens, the piece has as its central figures Montgomery Clift, Elizabeth Taylor, and Shelley Winters. (Capitol, B'way at 51st, JU 2-5060.)

The River—Jean Renoir's masterful treatment of the Rumer Godden novel about life along the Ganges. Produced by Kenneth McEldowney, an American, the film features Arthur Shields, Nora Swinburne, an Indian actress and dancer named Radha, and all kinds of other Indians who happened within the range of M. Renoir's camera. (Paris, 4 W. 58th, MU 8-0134. Showings are at 2:30 and 8:30; extra performances Saturdays and Sundays at 5:30, and Saturday evenings at 11:30. Reserved seats only.)

Tales of Hoffmann—An overblown British treatment of the famous opera, danced by one group onscreen, sung by another off, and filmed against preposterous sets. With Robert Rounseville, Leonide Massine, Moira Shearer, Ludmilla Tcherina, and Robert Helpmann. (Bijou, 209 W. 45th, CO 5-8215. Showings are at 2:30 and 8:30; extra performances Saturdays and Sundays at 5:30, and Saturday evenings at 11:30. Reserved seats only.)

Tony Draws a Horse—An English film that gently spoofs a number of the homeland's peculiar mores. Cecil Parker and Anne Crawford head an excellent cast. (Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd, GR 5-1660; and 8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th, GR 7-7874; starting Sept. 19.)

REVIVALS

All About Eve (1950)—Bette Davis and Anne Baxter in a comedy dealing with some of the foibles of the theatre. (68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th, RE 4-0302; through Sept. 14.)

Ballerina (1938)—Ballet folk backstage. In French, with Mia Slavenska. (55th St. Playhouse, 154 W. 55th, JU 6-4590; starting Sept. 14.)

Bringing Up Baby (1938)—Katharine Hepburn (a rich girl), Cary Grant (a scientist), and two leopards (leopards). (Beverly, 3rd Ave. at 50th, EL 5-8790; through Sept. 15, tentative. . . . ¶ Murray Hill, Park at 42nd, MU 2-1431; Sept. 16-18.)

Fame Is the Spur (1949)—An English film that follows the fortunes of a politician patterned after Ramsay MacDonald. With Michael Redgrave. (Thalia, B'way at 95th, AC 2-3370; Sept. 19.)

Gunga Din (1939)—Kipling's India. Cary Grant and Victor McLaglen. (Gracie Square, 1st Ave. at 89th, SA 2-2478; Sept. 15.)

The Happiest Days of Your Life (1950)—Margaret Rutherford and Alastair Sim in a British comedy about the merger of a boys' school and a girls' school. (5th Ave. Playhouse, 5th Ave. at 12th, OR 5-9630.)

King Solomon's Mines (1950)—Derring-do in Africa. With Deborah Kerr, Stewart Granger, and thousands of beasts. (68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th, RE 4-0302; Sept. 15-18.)

Man of Aran (1934)—A Robert Flaherty documentary film about Irish island life. (55th St. Playhouse, 154 W. 55th, JU 6-4590; Sept. 13.)

Night Train (1940)—Carol Reed's British thriller involving spies, the Gestapo, and the like. Margaret Lockwood and Rex Harrison. (5th Ave. Playhouse, 5th Ave. at 12th, OR 5-9630.)

Tight Little Island (1949)—An English comedy about some Scots and a wartime whiskey shortage. With Basil Radford. (Beverly, 3rd Ave. at 50th, EL 5-8790; starting Sept. 19, tentative.)

Museum of Modern Art Film Library—Through Sept. 16, showings at 3: "Little Lord Fauntleroy" (1921), with Mary Pickford. . . . ¶ Starting Sept. 17, showings at 3 and 5:30: "The Mark of Zorro" (1920), with Douglas Fairbanks. (A limited number of reservations are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the Museum, 11 W. 53rd, after noon on the day of the showing.)

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THE BROADWAY AREA

FILMS OF MORE THAN ROUTINE INTEREST APPEAR IN HEAVY TYPE AND ARE DESCRIBED IN THE SECTION ABOVE

Astor, B'way at 45th. (JU 6-2240)
Through Sept. 19: "Jim Thorpe—All American," Burt Lancaster, Charles Bickford.

Bijou, 209 W. 45th. (CO 5-8215)
TALES OF HOFFMANN.

Capitol, B'way at 51st. (JU 2-5060)
A PLACE IN THE SUN.

Criterion, B'way at 44th. (LU 2-1796)
"Alice in Wonderland," a full-length Walt Disney film.

Globe, B'way at 46th. (JU 6-5555)
Through Sept. 19: "Rhubarb," Ray Milland, Jan Sterling.

Mayfair, 7th Ave. at 47th. (CI 5-9800)
Through Sept. 19: "Little Egypt," Rhonda Fleming, Mark Stevens.

Music Hall, 6th Ave. at 50th. (CI 6-4600)
"Captain Horatio Hornblower," Gregory Peck, Virginia Mayo.

Paramount, B'way at 43rd. (LO 3-1100)
Through Sept. 18: "His Kind of Woman," Robert Mitchum, Jane Russell.
From Sept. 19: "Flying Leathernecks," John Wayne, Robert Ryan.

Rivoli, B'way at 49th. (CI 7-1633)
"David and Bathsheba," Gregory Peck, Susan Hayward.

Roxy, 7th Ave. at 50th. (CI 7-6000)
"People Will Talk," Cary Grant, Jeanne Crain.

State, B'way at 45th. (LU 2-5070)
Through Sept. 19 (tentative): "The People Against O'Hara," Spencer Tracy, Pat O'Brien.

Victoria, B'way at 46th. (JU 6-0540)
"Saturday's Hero," John Derek, Donna Reed.

Warner, B'way at 47th. (CI 7-5900)
Through Sept. 18: "Painting the Clouds with Sunshine," Dennis Morgan, Virginia Mayo.
From Sept. 19: "A Streetcar Named Desire," Vivien Leigh, Marlon Brando.

World, 153 W. 49th. (CI 7-5747)
"Pickup," Hugo Haas, Beverly Michaels.

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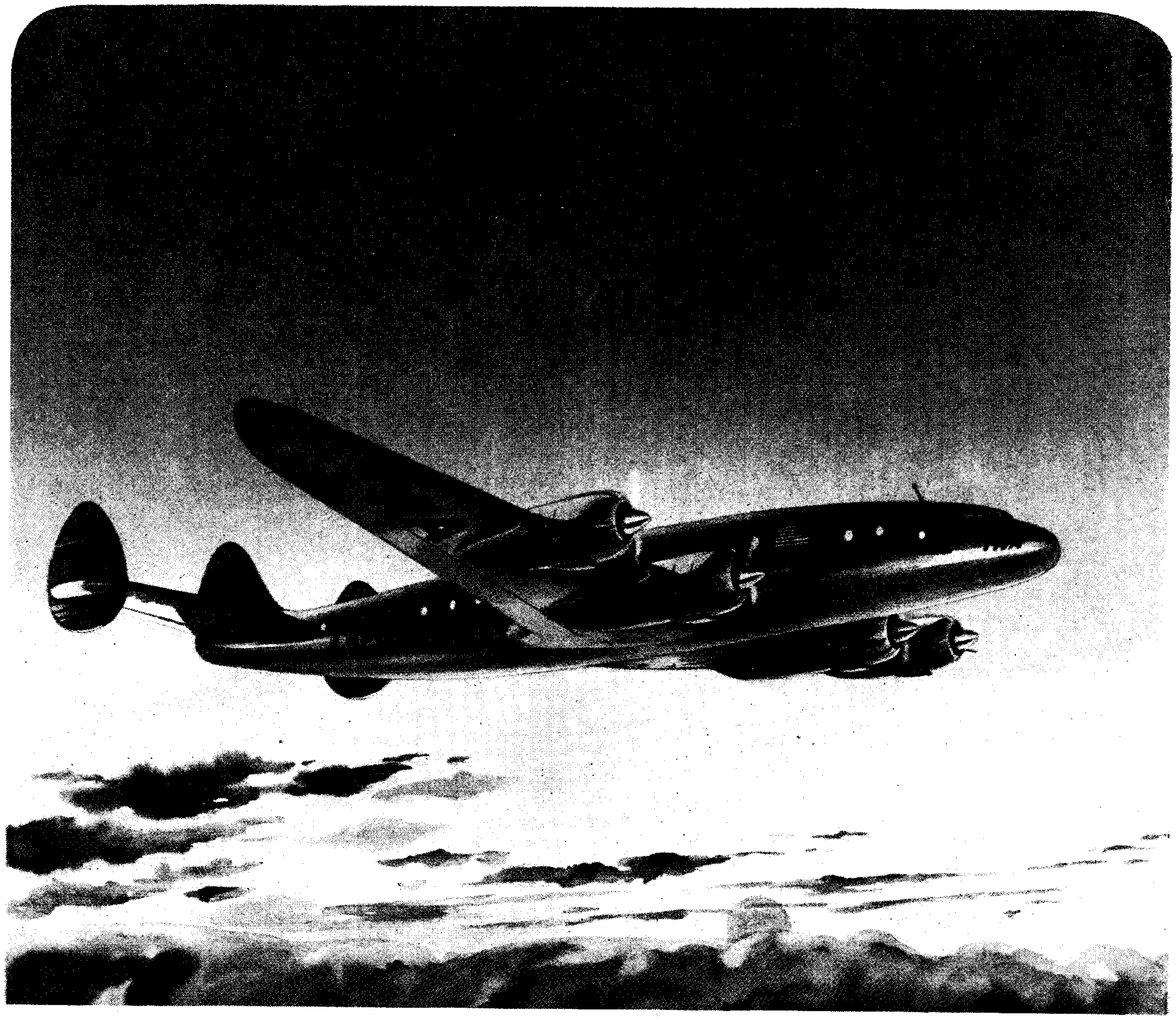

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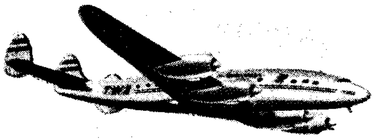

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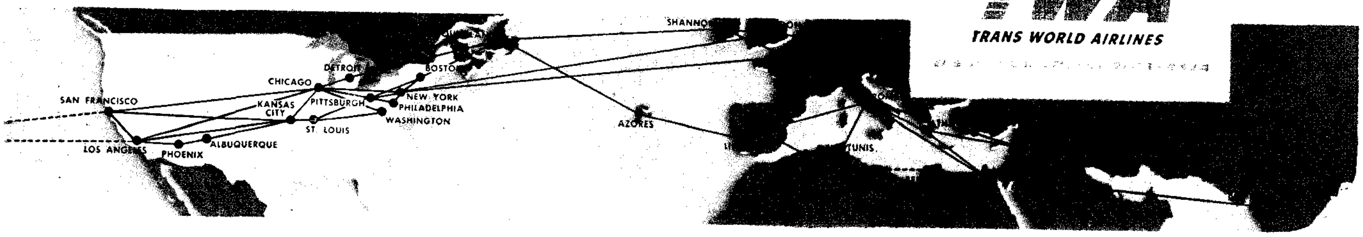
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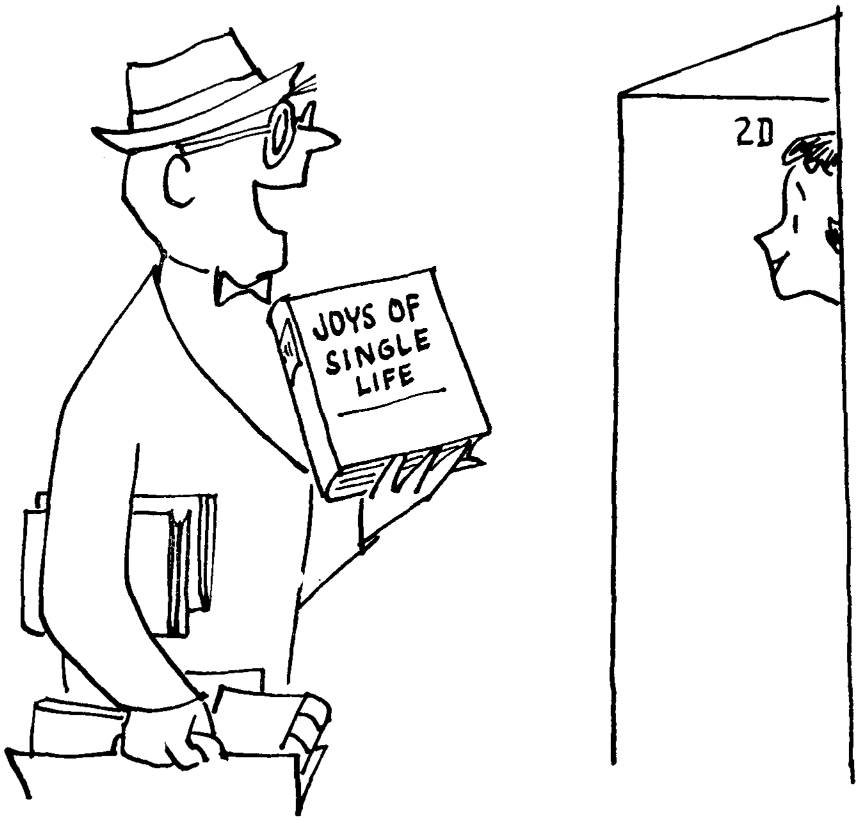
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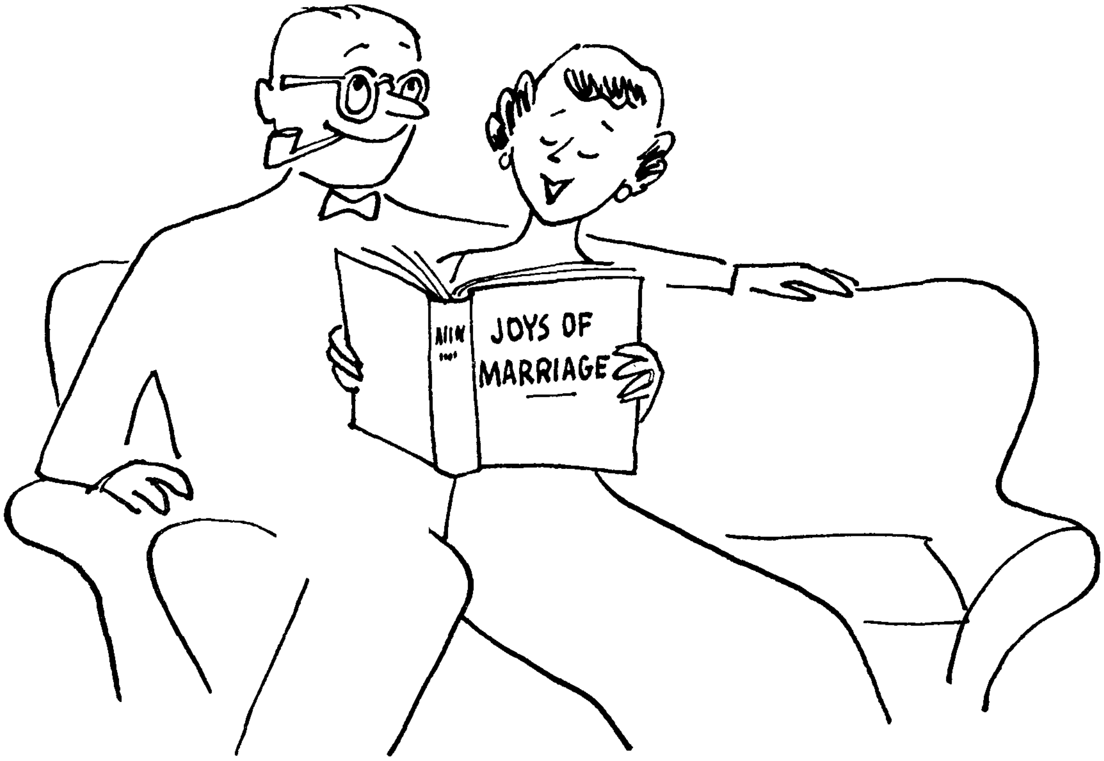
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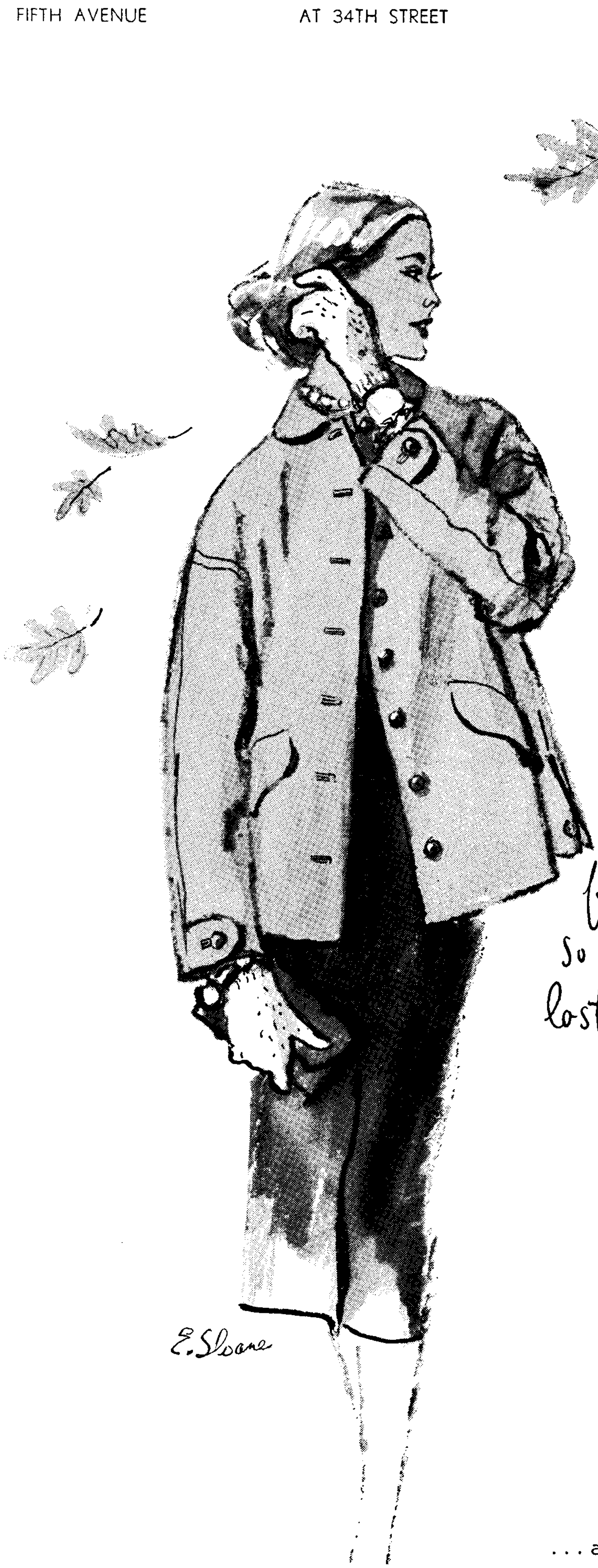

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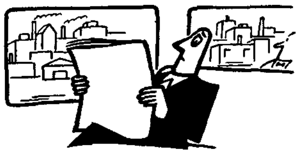
THE NEW YORKER

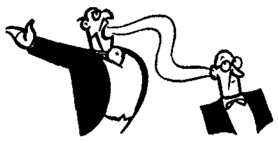
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

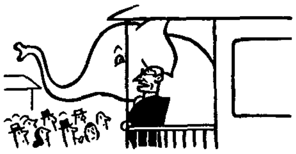
UP to a few days ago, the summer, now departing from the countryside, seemed to have been a pleasant one for us, because we did have some fun here and there. That is, we had the summer estimated in our memory book as a pleasant one until, while going through Providence on the way home from a holiday, we were hypnotized by a haunting headline in the Providence *Evening Bulletin*. It said, "MEDIOCRE SUMMER COMES TO DREARY CLOSE." It is a matter of chagrin for us to have to confess that our estimate of any one of our fairly numerous summers could be so precariously arrived at that a passing headline, written no doubt by a copyreader enwrapped in *Weltschmerz*, could topple it, yet the *Bulletin* headline did this. Its dolorous message keeps running through our head. Was it so pleasant a summer, after all, or have our recollections of happy days been mere pre-autumnal illusions? Mediocre Summer Comes to Dreary Close indeed! We wish sometimes that headline writers would keep their dark and dank impressions to themselves.



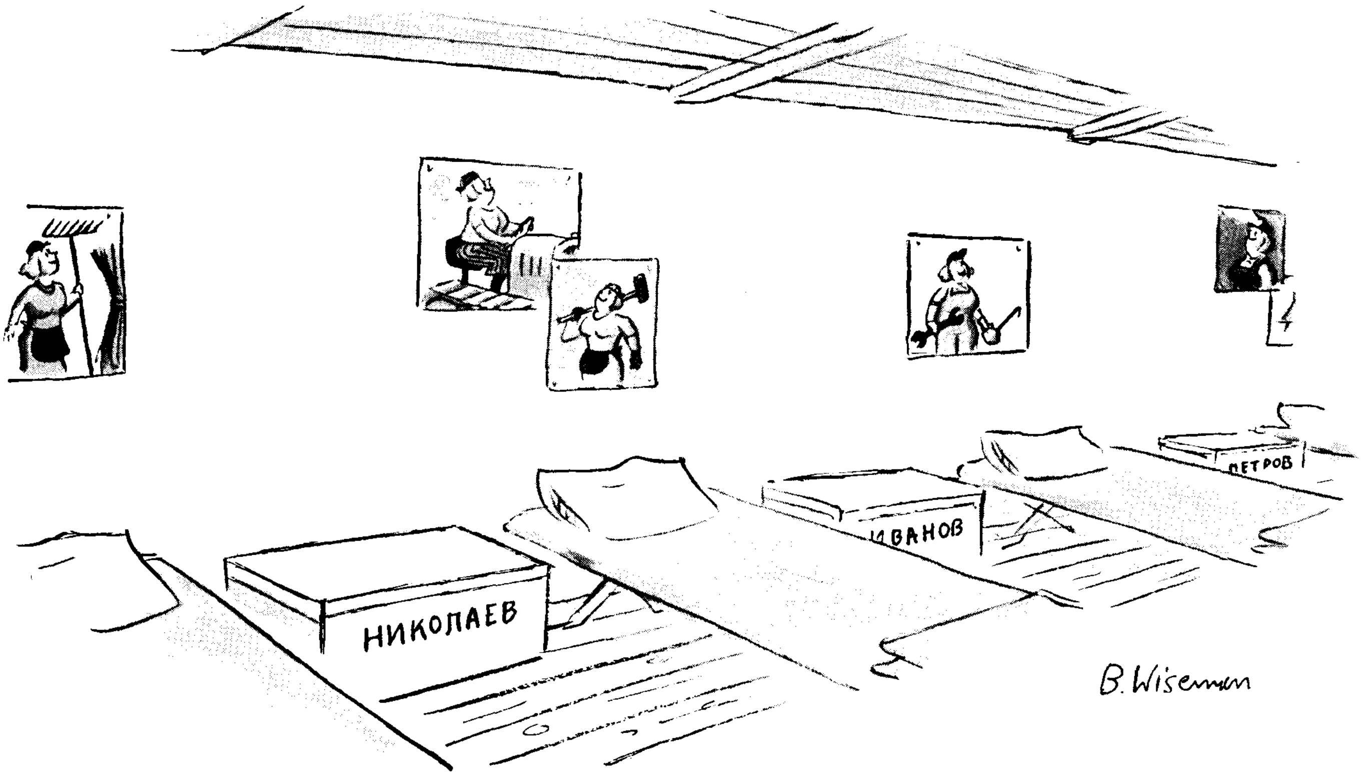
WE'VE been told that one snag at Kaesong, like so many international snags of late, has resulted from the inability of the rival negotiators to agree on definitions of certain basic words—the Communist definition of "peace," to cite one notorious example, failing by the thickness of an unabridged dictionary to match our own. Here at home, where until recently nobody bothered much about precise shades of meaning except lexicographers and lawyers, we've been noticing signs of a complementary trend in terminology. During a debate on the Senate floor several weeks ago, after Senator Lehman had referred to Senator McCarthy's conduct as "dastardly" and a colleague had risen to take exception to the term, Lehman obligingly shifted to "cowardly," and everybody seemed to feel better, though, as nearly as we can figure out, the two adjectives are synonymous. And a couple of weeks ago, at a hearing before the local Board of Education on teachers' salaries, after one witness had referred to somebody else as a "liar" and the presiding officer had expressed dismay at so unseemly a word, everything was smoothed over by the user's prompt substitution of "prevaricator," a distinction that would surely have confounded Roget. Our conclusion, a disturbing one, is that legislators' and educators' ears have become better attuned to the sound of words than to the sense of them—in the one instance, as might be expected of solons traditionally touchy about their honor, rejecting a word apparently only because it has homonymous implications of illegitimacy, and in the other, as might be expected of academicians, spurning the vulgar, pithy epithet for an epithet that, though indistinguishable in meaning, has at least the appeal of being polysyllabic.



THE death, en route to Washington, of the elephant that the King of Cambodia had presented to President Truman was a source of some disappointment to us. The President is conceded by even his most eloquent detractors to be an accomplished politician, and we had been wondering what political use he might find for the great beast. In the past, chief executives in receipt of similar presents have customarily turned them over to zoos, and such would doubtless have been the ultimate disposition of Mr. Truman's elephant. But if the President had shortly taken off on one of his cross-country speaking tours, he might have found it profitable to defer getting rid of the elephant until after the journey. Think of the effect on the inhabitants of this or that whistle stop if, as Mr. Truman appeared at dawn on the rear platform of his train, he had been accompanied by the very symbol of the opposition, kneeling submissively at his side and, on the delivery of a telling rhetorical point, trumpeting with shrill appreciation! It might have taken a pork barrel or two full of peanuts and some intensive training to insure a coöperative performance, but it would have been worth the effort.



The Republicans couldn't very well have let such an act go unchallenged, and the logical step for the G.O.P. would have been to furnish its campaign orators with donkeys. If it had, the electorate would quickly have become so confused that both parties would have had to trade in their old mascots for new ones. The inconvenience to political cartoonists notwithstanding, we'd have been all for it. Neither animal has ever struck us as suitable for high-class leadership. An elephant, for all its massive grandeur, is apt to grow panicky at the sight of a mouse—a reaction indicative of uncertainty about its own strength and of general instability, both qualities to be deplored in time of crisis. A donkey is altogether too stubborn and ornery to merit admiration in an era when open-mindedness and pliability are so sorely



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needed. To any party in search of a substitute animal, we suggest the Labrador retriever—sturdy, handsome, alert, intelligent, at home on land or water, the possessor of a firm but gentle jaw, an estimable watchdog, and terribly good with children.

•

INCIDENTAL INTELLIGENCE: The butter pats served to the staff of the Children's Center, Welfare Department, at 104th Street and Fifth Avenue, are stamped "Property of the City of New York."

Four ladies in Roslyn who all visit their psychiatrists in the city four times weekly have formed a car pool.

The town of Jersey Shore is in the middle of Pennsylvania.

Borough President

FORTIFIED with a box lunch and the good wishes of a host of friends, our man Stanley boarded the ferry Miss New York one morning last week and set sail for Staten Island, under instructions from us to have a chat with Cornelius A. Hall, borough president of Richmond. "Borough Hall is only a step from the St. George Ferry Terminal," Mr. Hall had told him over the phone. "You can't miss it. It stands out like a borough hall." And Stanley had no trouble finding it. The Borough President, a soft-spoken, clean-shaven, blue-eyed man of sixty-three, received him in a large office overlooking the harbor and containing photographs of Mayor Impellitteri, Governor Dewey, and President Truman. "I have the highest regard and respect for all three," he said. "I am also devoted to ex-Mayor O'Dwyer. He came over here many times, and was a real friend of Staten Island. He improved our ferry service and helped our bus transportation. A man of broad vision." Transportation, Stanley gathered, was much on Mr. Hall's mind. "Right now, I'm especially interested in getting our Board of Transportation to acquire the Perth Amboy Division of the Staten Island Rapid Transit Railway Company, which is a subsidiary of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad," he said. "This would make possible a ten-cent fare between St. George and Tottenville; the regular fare is now thirty-two cents, though it's less for purchasers of monthly commuting tickets. I'm also trying to promote the construction of Willowbrook Parkway across the center of the Island, from Bayonne Bridge to Marine Park. Great changes have taken place here since I was born. I've seen the pick and shovel give way to the steam shovel, and the steam shovel give way to the gasoline shovel. I've seen the woods turn into real-estate developments, and lakes turn into reservoirs."

Mr. Hall is a descendant of a family that has lived on Staten Island a hundred and fifteen years, and of three generations of stonecutters. In 1907, by answering a newspaper advertisement, he got a job as file clerk with the Allis Chalmers Manufacturing Company, in Manhattan, and stayed there fifteen years, ending up as a correspondent in the export department. He then joined one of his five brothers, Edward, in a Staten Island real-estate-development firm. Four years later, public life beckoned, in the shape of a public-building superintendency offered to him by John A. Lynch, then borough president, whose reëlection Mr. Hall had furthered as chairman of a businessmen's committee. An assistant commissionership and, next, a commissionership of public works followed, and, in 1945, the borough presidency, to which he was reëlected in 1949, after being nominated by both the Republicans and the Democrats. He and his wife and their six-year-old daughter, Patricia Ann, live in Eltingville, on the south shore of the Island. "I get up at six," he told Stanley, "fix my own breakfast—tomato juice, toast, and coffee—walk along the shore for fifteen minutes, go back to the house, shave, read the papers, talk to my family, and leave for the office around eight-fifteen, dropping my little girl off at her school on the way. My day here is taken up largely with consultations with engineers and city officials on projects for the Island." He handed Stanley a list of these, which included "Additional Ferryboats," "A Physical Connection with the Other Boroughs (Narrows Bridge)," "Express Highways," "Five Sewage-Treatment Plants," "City Market," "City College," "City Hospital," "More Schools," "More Libraries," and "A Municipal Stadium." "Sewage-treatment plants will reduce pollution in the lower bay and give us good fishing and swimming there," Mr. Hall said. "If, as I hope, oil tankers can be made to go out to sea before dumping bilge, we'll be able to plant oysters again."

The Borough Pres. gets edible hard clams off his own beach, which is a hundred and twenty feet long, and has caught many bass and weakfish there. He told Stanley that Richmond is the third-largest city borough in area, that it hasn't received a fair share of city money, that during the last war, because of Tompkinsville, it was a big troop-and-matériel embarkation port, that it has a lot of pheasants and the oldest elementary schoolhouse in the country, and that its Todt Hill, four hundred and nine feet above sea level, is the highest coastal elevation between Maine and the Florida Keys. "We have a population of two hundred thousand, and most of them hold the Borough President responsible for every phase of local government," he said. "If the ferries are late, they blame me. Everything I do is an open book. I came into Borough Hall with my head high, and I want to go out the same way."

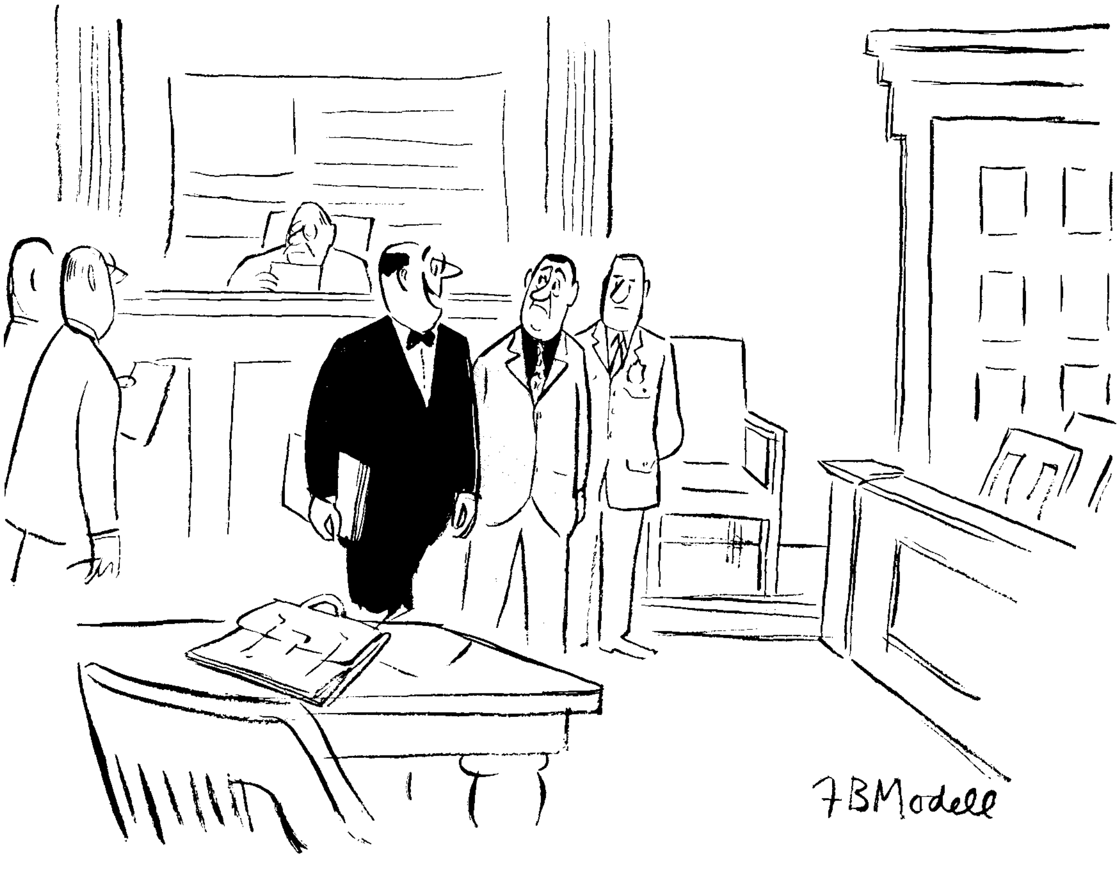
Hazards of Travel

MAN who bought a red, blue, yellow, and green striped golfing umbrella at Abercrombie & Fitch unfurled it several weeks ago at a bullfight in Maracay, Venezuela. Cheers, whistles, applause, and hisses rose from all sides. Presently, two policemen and three soldiers approached the owner and demanded the umbrella. They explained that it disgraced the national colors—red, blue, and yellow. The man pointed to the green, but because this stripe simply separated one sequence of red, blue, and yellow from another, making the whole thing look like a series of Venezuelan flags with neutral stripes in between, he got nowhere. The umbrella was confiscated, and although the owner, who subsequently travelled far and wide in the rest of South America and is still there, managed to retrieve it, he has kept it in closets in his hotels ever since, and he has also taken to wearing ties in solid colors or small patterns—no regimental or club stripes.

By Bounce

AMERICAN TEL & TEL uses two methods of transmitting television programs and large numbers of simultaneous telephone calls over long distances: the coaxial cable, the older and more familiar method, which we dealt with in these pages a couple of weeks ago, and radio relay, which supplements or, in some cases, duplicates coax, and on which we now present our findings. To plunge at once into no man's land, we will say that radio relay makes use of broad-band radio channels at the super-high-frequency, or microwave, end of the radio spectrum (the rest of the radio spectrum is already hopelessly congested by other forms of broadcasting) and that it "bounces" signals along these bands from relay station to relay station. A pair of broad-band radio channels can carry the same amount of traffic as a pair of coaxial cables—several hundred telephone calls at a time, or a single TV program in each direction—and costs about the same amount to build and maintain. Other things being equal, A.T. & T. favors coax when numerous branches along a given route are needed, to serve heavily populated areas, and radio relay when the emphasis is on bridging widely separated points.

Radio microwaves, poor little things, are only about three inches long, whereas waves in the standard broadcast band are about a thousand feet long. Most of the energy of microwaves travels in a straight line, which means that transmission is limited to the line of sight, which is limited, in turn, by the curvature of the earth and by obstacles in the terrain. To outwit both curvature and obstacles, line-of-sight relay stations are built anywhere from ten to fifty miles apart, generally on hilltops, and signals are focussed from station to station much the way the beam of a searchlight is focussed. The amount of power required to bounce a signal from one station to the next is absurdly small—half a watt. Telephone calls and TV programs sent by microwave are not subject to static, and A.T. & T. claims that even an expert can't tell whether a particular



"Ten years. That's a nice, round number—easy to remember."

telephone call is being carried by wire or by radio.

The first radio-relay circuit, linking New York and Boston, by eight relay stations, was opened late in 1947. Since then, New York has been linked by radio relay to Washington, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, Omaha, San Francisco, and points between. The biggest microwave project to date was that of joining Omaha and San Francisco; after two years' work, it was opened last month for telephone use, and last week for the first coast-to-coast TV. (In normal practice, TV will be transmitted by radio relay all the way from San Francisco to New York, but in some cases it will be distributed from Chicago by coax. C.B.S., which was in charge of the telecasting of the Japanese Peace Treaty do, brought the signals to New York by radio relay, then sent them out to its network by coax.) It takes a hundred and seven towers to bounce the microwave signals from coast to coast. The tallest tower is outside Des Moines—four hundred and twenty-seven feet high. The tower at the greatest elevation is on Mount Rose, in Nevada—ten thousand and seventy-five feet above sea level. A hundred miles farther west, the transmitting antennae, mounted on a hundred-foot tower, are only a hundred and thirty feet above sea level.

Unlike coax, radio relay has nothing to fear from gophers or ditchdiggers; its chief natural enemy is wind. The towers are built to withstand winds of up to hurricane force, but not tornadoes. Some of the towers are of steel openwork, and for these the necessary equipment is housed in an adjoining building. Most of the towers, however, are of concrete, and are self-contained. They have a gasoline engine on the ground floor, to generate emergency power; storage batteries and electrical apparatus on the second and third floors; and amplifying and testing equipment on the fourth floor. The stations are designed for unattended operation, and an elaborate alarm system makes it possible for engineers many miles away to keep tabs on forty-two different things that may go wrong, from an accidentally opened door to the failure of an aircraft-warning light. Before building a tower, a crew runs up a test tower, which may be as high as two hundred feet, on a prospective site; if the signal is good between towers and if a survey shows that intervening trees are unlikely to grow tall enough to prove a nuisance, the site is purchased and a permanent tower erected. The towers follow a zigzag course, which prevents the antennae of one tower from picking up any signal except that of the tower immediately adjacent to it. Microwave frequencies are subject to reflection, and, wherever possible, bodies of water, salt flats, and other reflecting surfaces are avoided. If they can't be avoided, the signal is beamed on a slant via towers of different elevations, in a sort of giant W. The signal not being parallel with the reflecting surface, the reflection is minimized and— well, *minimized*. Anyhow, the President's image came bouncing across the salty wastes of Utah and onto our screen without a tremor.

Modern Gracchi

ON the occasion of a recent gigantic furniture sale at Wanamaker's, a lady accompanied by five children ranging in age from three or four to the middle teens pushed into the crowd waiting for the doors to open at ten o'clock, causing a number of people to wonder what in Tophet she was doing with such a following at such a time. Presently, they found out. When the doors opened, she was swept, with her brood, up to the sixth floor, scene of the sale. There a pride of ladies headed for fifty upholstered living-room chairs, reduced from $35.95 to nine dollars. After the smoke had cleared, the multiple mother was revealed to have secured six of these by placing each of her children on one and herself on the sixth. Let those who say large families no longer make sense economically in big cities forever hold their peace.

Rolls and Flams

A LADY who read our article on Duke Ellington's drummer, Louis Bellson, a few weeks ago, advised us by mail to look up Alan I. Abel, whom she called the country's foremost authority on rudimental drumming. Bellson, she noted, recommends the finger system of drumming; in simple justice, she said, we should talk with a drummer who recommends the wrist system, and Abel was our man. He was, she continued, a lecturer on percussion instruments, the winner of two national rudimental-drumming contests, and the author of a book, "The Rudiments of the Drum," that, when published this fall, would revolutionize the art of teaching the instrument.

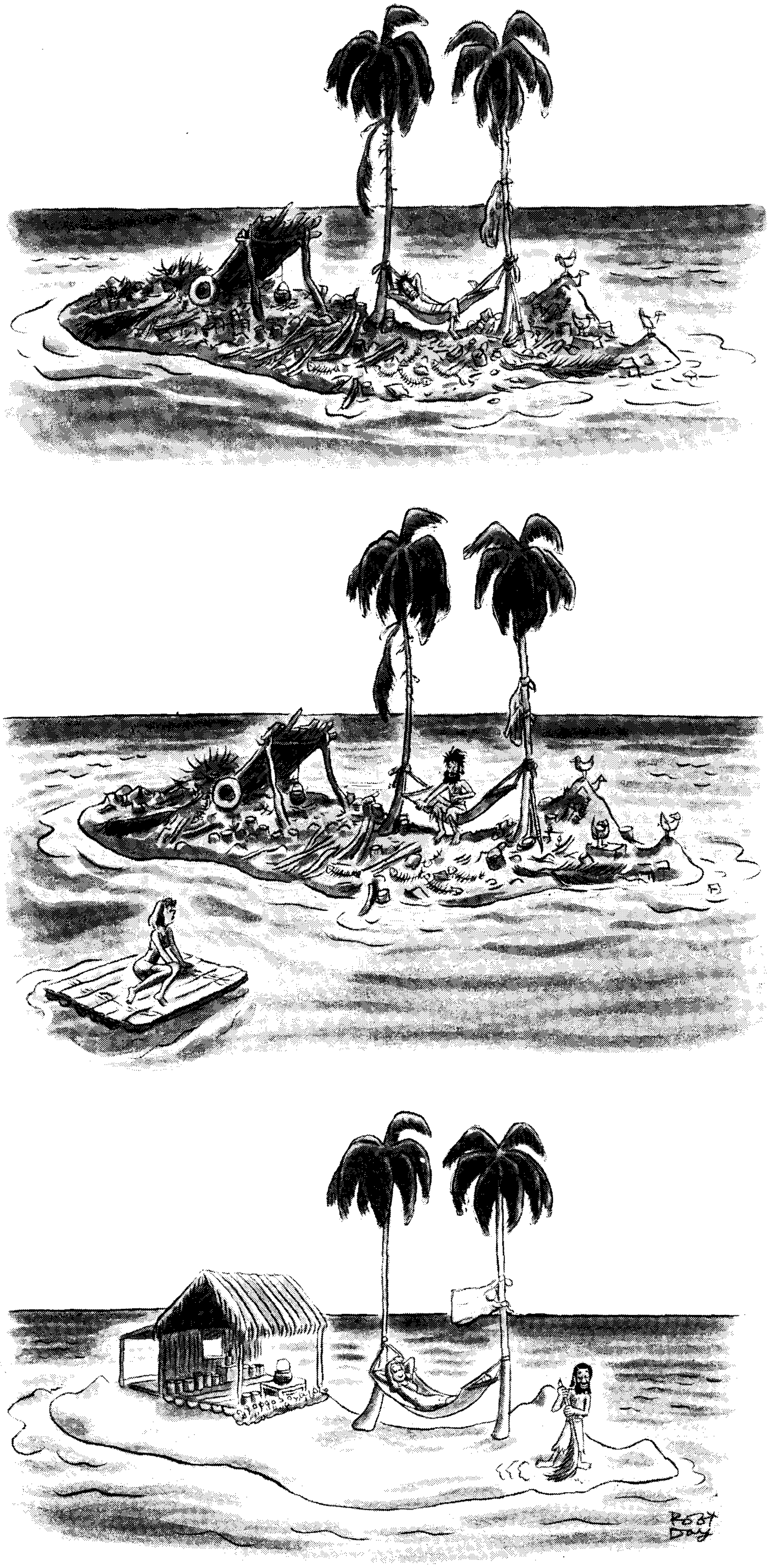
Mr. Abel is also, we learned in the course of a visit we paid to his apartment, on West End Avenue, one day last week, the substitute percussionist, on Sundays and Mondays, in the Radio City Music Hall orchestra; a performer in night clubs like One Fifth Avenue and Café Society, where he does a humorous monologue on the history of drumming over the past two thousand years; the composer of several published works for drum soloists, including "524 Main Street," "2040's Sortie," and "Drudgery for Drums;" and the author of an as yet unpublished musical fairy tale called "Albert the Weasel." "Albert looks like a weasel, but he's not really a weasel," Mr. Abel, a stocky, dark-haired young man in a red cloth coat, told us, puffing at a pipe. "He's a human percussionist who gets into trouble with the London Symphony because he wants to syncopate. It's narration, plus melody and percussion, and could be performed at children's symphony concerts, or done as a children's record. It's a kind of satire on stuffy music, in the Jonathan Swift vein." His book on drumming, which he took over a year to write, is opposed to stuffy drum instruction. "Drum instructors know less about their instrument than any other music instructors," he went on earnestly. "The drum today is like a stepchild. The instructors go by the twenty-three variations of the three rudiments of drumming—the single roll, the double roll, and the flam—which were drawn up during the Civil War. The flam, by the way, is a sound made by almost simultaneously striking the drumhead twice, once with each stick, so that the two strokes are heard very close together and go 'fl-am.' What with bop and drum solos and bandwork, half of the twenty-three are now obsolete. The result is the instructors spend their time teaching a lot of useless stuff and can't concentrate on first principles. The

result of *that* is their students wind up doing dirty flams and smudgy rolls, and if the score calls for a four-stroke rough—that's four strokes, accent on the last one—they do a five-stroke or seven-stroke roll. The situation is chaotic."

Mr. Abel, upon our inquiry, told us that he was born in Zanesville, Ohio, the home of Zane Grey, attended high school in Coshocton, Ohio, and graduated, after a hitch in the Army Air Forces, from Ohio State University, and added that in his book he'd cut down the number of rudiments and rudimental variations to twelve. "I left out such stuff as the drag paradiddle, the flam paradiddle-diddle, and the single, double, and triple ratamacues, which are about as useful today as a rhinoceros in your living room," he said. "I also recommended changing the accent of the double roll. It used to be 'Ma-ma, da-da.' It should be 'Ma-*ma*, da-*da*.' Much better!" As far as systems of drumming go, Abel is, as we'd been told in advance, strong for the one that puts the main burden on the wrists rather than the fingers. "I defy any finger drummer to roll through 'The Star-Spangled Banner' fortissimo," he said. "Finger drummers depend on the arm, wrist, *and* fingers, and the bounce of the drumhead. They don't have the control of the sticks that a wrist drummer has. Besides that, they're insecure. I went through a terrible period of confusion in 1940 and 1941, when I was trying to decide which was the right way to drum. Finally, a reporter for the Canton, Ohio, *Repository* who drummed as a hobby and a psychiatrist who drummed as a hobby told me the wrist way was the right way. They pointed out that one symptom of insecurity in finger drummers was they dropped their sticks. Since 1941, I've never dropped a stick. I've never heard of a wrist drummer who did. One reason a wrist drummer can sit down to the drums feeling secure is that he depends on himself for the stroke, not on the tension of the drumhead. I practice two hours a day—one hour on a rubber pad and one hour on a cushion, which has no bounce at all. I defy a finger-system drummer to play a flam-tap flam flamacue on a cushion. It's great to feel secure."

Expansion

THE Utopia Auto Laundry, of Flushing, has set up a frozen-meat department. Filet mignon is $1.75 a pound—twenty-five cents more than a car wash.



FROM THERE TO INFINITY

(AFTER READING "FROM HERE TO ETERNITY," BY JAMES JONES)

> We all have a guilt-edged security.
> —*Moses.*

"STARK romanticism" was the phrase that kept pounding through his head as he knocked on the door of Mama Paloma's, saw the slot opened and the single sloe plum that was Mama Paloma's eye scrutinizing him through the peephole. "Oh, you again," the eye grinned at him, sliding back the bolt of the door. "The girls are all pretty busy tonight but go on up." A dress of sequins that made her look like a fat mermaid with scales three-quarters instead of halfway up tightly encased the mounds of old snow that was her flesh. She glanced down at the must-be-heavy-as-lead suitcase in his hand as she closed the door. "I don't dare ast how many pages you're carting around in that by now," she grinned.

He mounted the steps with that suffocating expectation of men who are about to read their stuff, the nerves in his loins tightening like drying rawhide, the familiar knot hard in his belly. Shifting the suitcase from one hand to the other, his head swam into the densening surf of upstairs conversation, above which the tinkle of the player piano was like spray breaking all-the-time on rocks. Standing in the upper doorway, he reflected how, just as there can be damned senseless pointless want in the midst of plenty, so there can be the acutest loneliness in the midst of crowds. Fortunately, the thought passed swiftly. The whores moved, blatant as flamingos in their colored gowns, among the drinking-grinning men, and his eye ran tremulously swiftly in search of Dorine, gulpingly taking in the room for her figure moving erectly womanly through it all.

"No Princess to listen tonight," Peggy grinned toward him. "The Princess went away."

He could have slapped her. It puzzled him to find that beneath that hard, crusty exterior beat a heart of stone. What was she doing in a place like this? He turned and hurried back down the stairs.

"Come back soon, there's listeners as good as the Princess," Mama Paloma laughed jellily jollily as she let him out into the street.

With Dorine not there he couldn't bear Mama Paloma's, and he didn't know another place. Yet he had to have a woman tonight. Another woman would have to do, any woman.

Colonel Stilton's wife, he thought. Why not? She was from Boston, but there was no mistaking the look of hard insolent invitation she gave him each time she came to the Regimental Headquarters to ask if he knew where the Colonel had been since night before last. He hated Stilton's guts, or would if he, Stilton, had any. Hated that smirk and that single eyebrow always jerking sardonically skeptically up, like an anchovy that's learned to stand on end. Why not transfer out, why be a noncom under that bastard? he asked himself. I'm a noncompoop, he thought. He tried to make a joke of it but it was no good.

HE knew where the Colonel lived from the time he'd taken him home stewed. He got out of the cab a block from the house. As he approached it walking, he could see Mrs. Stilton under a burning bulb on the screened terrace with her feet on a hassock, smoking a cigarette. She had on shorts and a sweater. Her slim brown legs like a pair of scissors made a clean incision in his mind. He went up the flagstone walk and rapped on the door.

"What do you want?" she said with the same insolent invitation, not stirring. He was aware of the neat, apple-hard breasts under the sweater, and of the terse, apple-hard invitation in her manner.

"I want to read this to you," he said, trying not to let his voice sound too husky.

"How much have you got in there," her voice knew all about him.

"A quarter of a million words," he said.

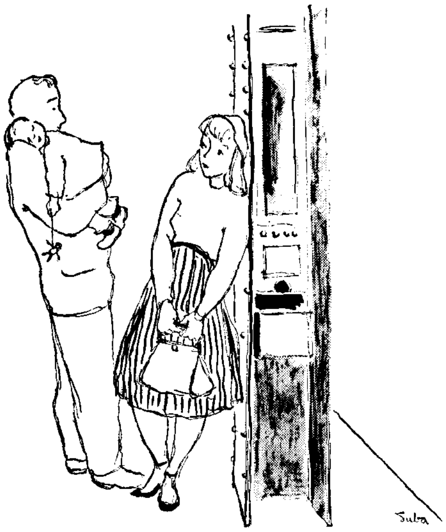
She came over and opened the screen door and flipped her cigarette out among the glows of the fireflies in the yard. When she turned back he caught the screen door and followed her inside. She sat down on the hassock and looked away for what seemed an eternity.

"It's a lot to ask of a woman," she said. "More than I've ever given."

He stood there shifting the suitcase to the other hand, the arm-about-to-come-out-of-its-socket ache added to that in his throat, wishing he wouldn't wish he hadn't come. She crossed her arms around her and, with that deft motion only women with their animal confidence can execute, pulled her sweater off over her head and threw it on the floor. "That's what you want, isn't it?" she said.

"You with your pair of scissors," he said. "When you can have a man who's willing to bare his soul." He gritted his teeth with impatience. "Don't you see how much we could have?"

"Come on in." She rose, and led the way inside. Nothing melts easier than ice, he thought, sad. He watched her draw the drapes across the window nook and settle herself back among the cushions. "I'm all yours," she said. "Read."



THE female is a yawning chasm, he thought, glancing up from his reading at the lying listening woman. He found and read the passage explaining that, how she was the inert earth, passive potent, that waits to be beaten soft by April's fecundating rains. Rain is the male principle and there are times for it to be interminable: prosedrops into rivulets of sentences and those into streams of paragraphs, these merging into chapters flowing in turn into sectional torrents strong and hard enough to wear gullies down the flanks of mountains. After what seemed an eternity, he paused and she stirred.

"What time is it?" she sat up.

"A quarter to three."

"I never knew it could be like this," she said.

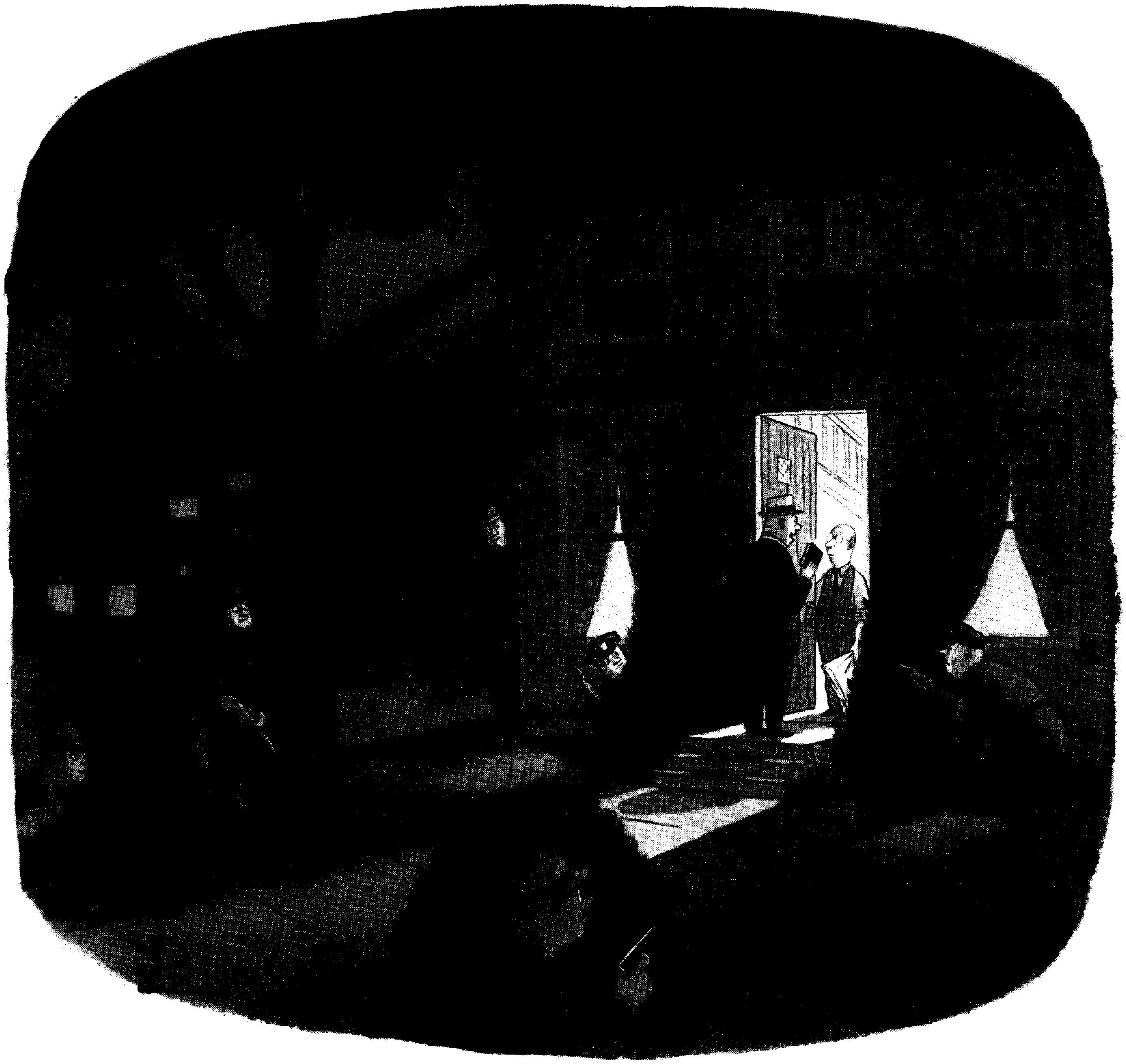
Each knew the other was thinking of Colonel Stilton.

"He never reads anything but *Quick*," she said, rolling her head away from him.

"The sonofabitch," he said, his fist involuntarily clenching as tears scalded his eyes. "Oh, the rotten sonofabitch!"

"It's no matter. Tell me about you. How did you get like this?"

Bending his head over the manuscript again he readingly told her about that part: how when he was a kid in downstate Illinois his uncle, who had wanted to be a lawyer but had never been able to finish law school because he would get roaring drunk and burn up all his



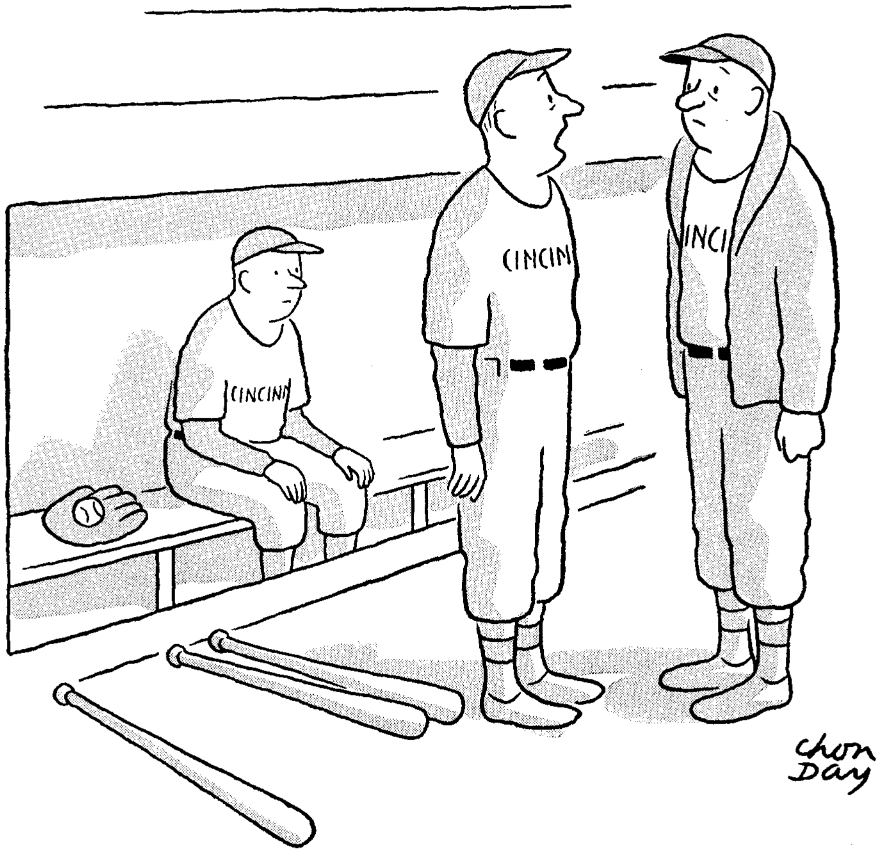
"Excuse me, sir, but are you the Arthur Johnson who lost this diary?"

• •

textbooks, used to tell him about his dream, and about his hero, the late Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, who in those great early days of this country was working on a manuscript which he would never let out of his sight, carrying it with him in a sack even when he went out courting or to somebody's house to dinner, setting it on the floor beside his chair. How his uncle passed this dream on to him, and how he took it with him to the big cities, where you began to feel how you had to get it all down, had to get down everything that got you down: the singing women in the cheap bars with their mouths like shrimp cocktails, the daughters-into-wives of chicken-eating digest-reading middle-class hypocrisy that you saw riding in the purring cars on Park Avenue, and nobody anywhere loving anybody they were married to. You saw that and you saw why. You had it all figured out that we in this country marry for idealistic love, and after the honeymoon there is bound to be disillusionment. That after a week or maybe a month of honest passion you woke up to find yourself trapped with the sow Respectability, which was the chicken-eating digest-reading middle-class assurance and where it lived: the house with the, oh sure, refrigerator, oil furnace and all the other automatic contraptions that snicker when they go on—the well-lighted air-conditioned mausoleum of love. She was a better listener than Fillow, a middle-aged swell who had eight hundred jazz records and who would sit in Lincoln Park in Chicago eating marshmallow out of a can with a spoon with gloves on. Every time he tried to read Fillow a passage, Fillow would say "Cut it out." Fillow was a negative product of bourgeois society just as Stilton with his chicken-eating digest-reading complacence was a positive one, whom his wife had and knew she had cuckolded the minute she had let the suitcase cross the threshold.

"It'll never be the same again, will it?" she said fondly softly, seeing he had paused again.

He read her some more and it was the same. Except that the thing went on



“I feel kind of silly asking this, Chief, but I wonder if I could have tomorrow afternoon off to go to my grandmother’s funeral.”

• •

so long the style would change, seeming to shift gears of itself like something living a hydramatic life of its own, so that side by side with the well-spent Hemingway patrimony and the continental cry of Wolfe would be the seachanged long tireless free-form sentences reminiscent of some but not all or maybe even much of Faulkner.

THE door flew open and Stilton stood inside the room. His eyes were like two wet watermelon pips spaced close together on an otherwise almost blank plate (under the anchovies one of which had learned to stand on end).

“So,” he said. The word sailed at them like a yoyo flung out horizontally by someone who can spin it that way. It sailed for what seemed an infinity and came back at him.

“So yourself,” she said. “Is this how long officers’ stags last?” she said.

“So he *forced his way in here*,” the Colonel cued her, at the same time talking for the benefit of a six-foot MP who hove into view behind him.

Realization went like a ball bouncing among the pegs of a pinball machine till it dropped into the proper slot in his mind and a bell rang and a little red flag went up reading “Leavenworth.” He remembered what he’d heard. That an officer’s wife is always safe because all she had to do was call out the single word rape and you were on your way to twenty years.

Why did he just stand there, almost detached? Why wasn’t his anger rising from his guts into his head and setting his tongue into action? But what could you say to a chicken-eating digest-reading impediment like this anyhow, who with all the others of his kind had gelded contemporary literature and gelded it so good that an honest book that didn’t mince words didn’t stand a chance of getting even a smell of the best-seller list?

“This is my affair,” he heard her say coolly, after what seemed a particularly long eternity.

The Colonel lighted a cigarette. “I suspected you were having one,” they saw him smokingly smirk, “and since Klopstromer was seeing me home from the club I thought he might as well—” He stopped and looked down at the suitcase. “How long does he expect to *stay*?”

“I have something to say,” he said, stepping forward.

“*Sir.*”

“I have something to say, sir,” he said, picking up the suitcase to heft it for their benefit. “When Justice—”

“You’ll get justice,” the Colonel snapped as Klopstromer sprang alertly forward and bore down on him and wrested the suitcase from his grasp. “If you won’t testify,” the Colonel went on to his wife, “then Klopstromer at least will. That he assaulted a superior officer. It won’t get him Leavenworth, but by God six months in the stockade will do him good.”

“But why?” his wife protested. “You don’t understand. He’s a writer.”

“Maybe,” they saw the Colonel smirkingly smoke. The anchovy twitched and stood upright. “Maybe,” he said, motioning to Klopstromer to march him out through the door to the waiting jeep, “but he needs discipline.”

—PETER DE VRIES

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PINEY WOODS

Teeth on the saw,
Teeth on the rake,
Trout in the brook,
Pine in the brake . . .

The big trees sing to the little trees
In the pine-crowded brake,
“Here is a twigful of sky,” they sing,
“That we will stretch out our limbs and take.
Here is a seep of rain to drink
And moldering leaves to yeast our bread.
Give us the last of your earth,” they sing,
“That our great roots may spread.”

Gorging on mold,
Engrossing the sky,
The big trees grow.
The little trees die.

—MALCOLM COWLEY

THE DEATH OF PIERCE

Mimi's sister, Maud, was the only one of the three of them who was not very sick. She was not allowed to see Mimi much the first few days, and neither of them was allowed to go into Pierce's room. All week his door was kept closed, and on the other side of the door it was silent a great deal of the time. And always their mother's voice with him was very gentle. Yet the two little girls were not entirely aware of how sick Pierce was; Mimi, especially, did not dream of his being in danger.

Toward the end of the week, the trained nurse came. By the time she was expected to arrive, on an afternoon, Mimi was well enough to sit up in bed and be visited by Maud. Maud had been with her ever since lunch, and was sitting on the window seat with Sandy, her stuffed Scotch terrier, when the sound of a car on the gravel driveway pervaded the waiting house.

"It must be her," said Mimi.

Maud leaned forward to lift the shade and peeked cautiously out the open window. "It's a green car," she said.

"What *kind* of car?"

"I don't know," Maud admitted.

At once, Mimi climbed out of bed and went feebly to the window and looked herself. "It's an Oldsmobile," she stated, and hurried shakily back to bed. She lay among her pillows, feeling damp and anxious. During the winter, she had spent weeks learning the names of cars, so that Pierce would not be the only one who knew.

"You shouldn't have gotten out of bed," Maud said quietly.

And, quite as quietly, Mimi said, "But Pierce will want to know." Mimi was eight, a year older than Pierce and three years younger than Maud.

The little girls heard their mother go downstairs, and then they heard the screen door slam and her high heels crossing the porch. In the still heat of midafternoon, they heard the two women's voices, fluttering and assured, below the open window.

"What does she look like?" asked Mimi.

"She has red hair."

"Let me see." And, without really wanting to this time, Mimi climbed out of bed again and went to the window.

"You shouldn't," said Maud, and furtively they peered around the edge of the shade.

"She has red hair," Mimi agreed in a whisper. "And big teeth. I don't like her. I'm not going to remember her name."

"It's Miss Dunston."

"I don't care—I'm not going to remember it," Mimi said. "Pierce will hate her, too."

By six o'clock, things looked even more as if they would never be the same again. Their mother and father acted more worried and hurried than ever, and paid the girls almost no attention. The young nurse brought Mimi's supper up to her on Maud's tray.

"There we are!" she said, plumping it down on the bed. And before Mimi could speak, she had bounced from the room, as if this whole thing were a vacation. A minute later, Mimi's mother came in, but she didn't say anything and looked about her in an inquiring way, as if she were trying to remember what she had forgotten.

"Mother," began Mimi in a trembling voice, "I don't have my own tray, or my own napkin ring, either."

Her mother said, "Dear, you must try not to complain. We're all very busy with Pierce, and you can be a big help to us by not fussing."

"It's the third day that I've had to eat applesauce," said Mimi faintly.

"My darling, I can't *help* it—"

There was a high, thin call from Pierce's room, and her mother turned and ran out. Mimi listened, and then, with Maud's tray on her lap and her supper untouched, she began to cry. She felt, wearily, that things would never be right again. It would be days before she could get up, and before Pierce could, and they could run around all they wanted to—climb the barn roof, as they'd planned, and go swimming again in the pond, and look for the huge snapping turtle at the shallow end, where the bulrushes grew. It would be days before things would get back to being the same again, and already summer was nearly over.

The nurse came down the hall from the linen closet; she halted outside the door and saw Mimi's tears, and then came in briskly. When she reached out and put a hand on Mimi's warm forehead, Mimi stopped crying and sat immobile and straight, like a photograph of herself.

"Poor kiddie," said the nurse. "I guess you feel forgotten. It's the young man of the house who's getting all the attention, isn't it?"

Resistantly, Mimi said, "He has always gotten it."

"Don't I know!" said the nurse with a wry smile. "Already! Little Brother sure knows how to throw his weight around in *this* house! Well, cheer up, honey, it may not always be his

CBS TV
"NO, GORDON, NO! WE CAN'T GO ON THIS WAY—WITH NED NOT KNOWING—AND ALL THAT. PLEASE, DARLING—
LOVE YOU
TOMORRO
BUT WE
Alan Dunn

world. You eat your applesauce and dry your tears. What time are you supposed to be tucked in?"

"Eight o'clock," said Mimi, with a vague feeling of comfort.

"Eight it is. If Little Brother lets me get away, I'll come in a few minutes before and read you a story. How's that?"

"All right," said Mimi; she spoke with a touch of reserve, as Pierce might have said it, and she watched Miss Dunston sway briskly out of the room. For a while she lay listening to the evening birds in the vine that grew about the house, and to crickets shrilling from the fields in the tall, dry August grass. Finally she sat up and ate her supper in the dim bedroom and then lay back again. From her bed, she watched the moon rise big above the low pine trees bordering the far edge of the daisy meadow; she watched its deep-rose light grow pale, and waited for Miss Dunston. But Miss Dunston never came, because Pierce kept her.

MIMI woke late at night to the sound of low voices. She heard people moving about in other rooms, in that part of the house where Pierce lay. Uneasily she listened in the dark. Then she got out of bed and tiptoed across the room and through the sewing room that separated her room from Maud's. Maud was awake, too; she sat up at once, as if she had been expecting her.

"Maud?"

"What?"

"What's the matter?"

"Pierce must be sick again," said Maud.

By the light of the moon that fell through the vine-dark window, Mimi saw Sandy lying beside her sister on the pillow.

"Maud . . . Let me come in here tonight?"

"Do you think you're well *now*?"

"Yes. I think I am. My head feels all right."

"They'd be furious, though," said Maud.

"Oh, please, Maud! I'm afraid of the dark." If necessary, things like this could be confessed to her sister.

Diplomatic, Maud paused, and then spoke kindly. "I tell you what, Mim. We'll keep our doors to the sewing room open. They'll never know. And I can hear you and you can hear me."

After a minute, Mimi said, "All right."

"Would you like to take Sandy to your bed? I'll let you."

"No. Thank you just the same, though."

"That's all right," Maud said.

Mimi crossed the dark floor back to her own room; in the moonlight its white walls seemed to stand at attention. She moved to the window seat and found Ralph in his toy crib. Ralph was a baby boy, and her favorite doll. She picked him up now and crept into her bed with him and laid him, carefully, next the headboard. Then she leaned out into the dark, tentatively, toward the sewing-room door, and called, low, "Maud!"

Maud's answer came in a comfortingly loud whisper: "What?"

"Nothing," Mimi said, and lay back again. All at once, she loved Maud very much, quite as much as she had ever loved Pierce. In another part of the house, now, more lights went on, and she heard her mother call, "*Steve! Steve!*"

The sounds that followed were confused; down the hall, across the landing

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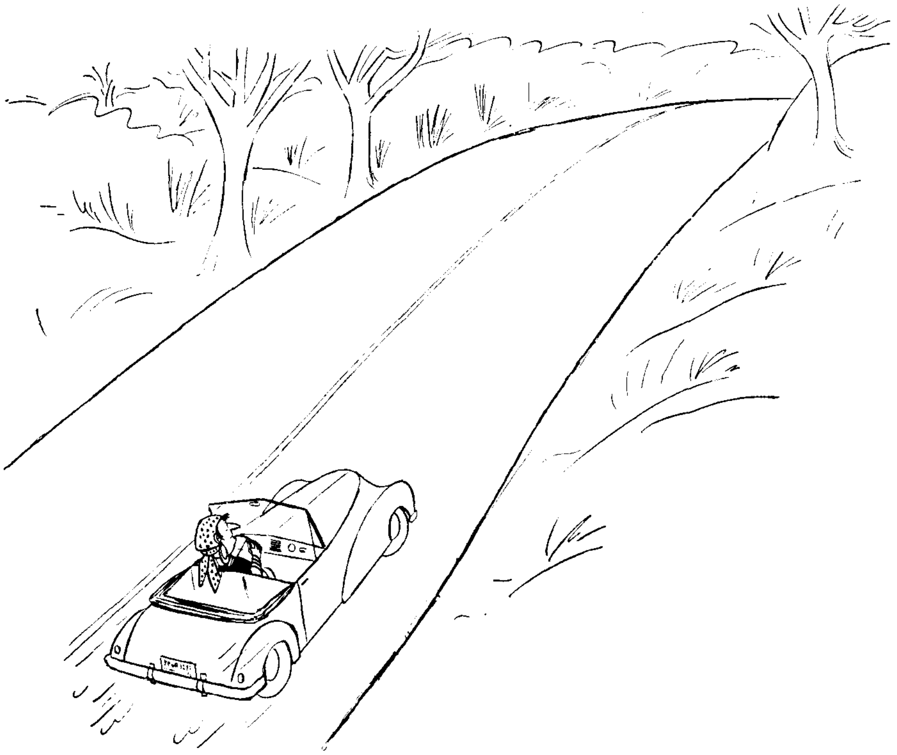

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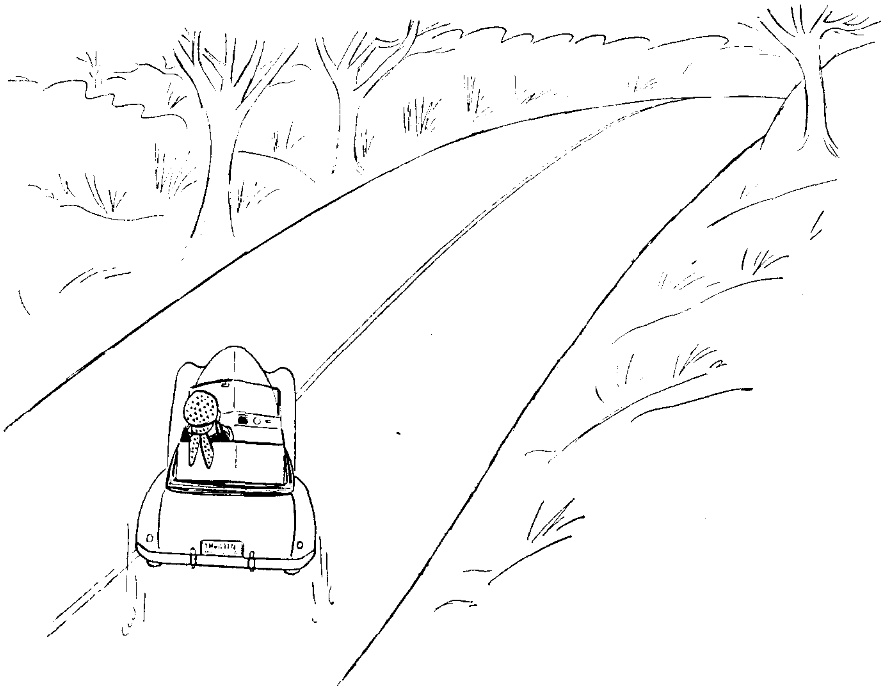

of the stairs, skirts rustled, footsteps fell. Mimi reached upward for Ralph. She was glad she would not have to see Miss Dunston in her bathrobe and perhaps with face cream on; she knew she would not recognize her. Beyond Mimi's door and farther down the hall, there was a disjointed whispering. Her father's voice at the upstairs telephone, indistinct but firm, decisive, and familiar, was what finally calmed her and, after a long time, caused her to fall into sleep again, far from Maud.

THE next day was the worst day of the summer. Early, Dr. Jones's 1942 Ford turned in to the driveway, spitting gravel slowly. Outside, with the dew not yet gone from the grass, the August heat was already breathless, the sky's color faint.

Miss Dunston brought up Mimi's breakfast and told her to eat what she could and to get into her clothes when she had finished.

When Mimi was dressed, their father led both Maud and Mimi out of the house. Everyone, that day, seemed to forget that it was Mimi's first day up and that she shouldn't be hurried. Their father carried two deck chairs across the lawn to the green shade of the maple she and Pierce had spent the first part of summer climbing. Mimi and Maud watched their father unfold and arrange the chairs.

“Be sure to stay out of the sun,” he said, and hurried away again. The little girls sat themselves carefully in the big chairs; they watched him cross the lawn and enter the house and catch the screen door before it slammed.

Maud sat quietly with Sandy at her feet. She was knitting a dark-red sweater for Ralph. Ralph lay on his back on the grass, but Mimi felt too listless even to turn and look at him. Before her, across the lawn, the big house with Pierce in it crouched squat and still; its front awnings were down, shading the rooms from sun. The whole, trembling day seemed green to Mimi; the indifferent trees, the lawn, the fields, even the crouched house shimmered greenly. She knew that if she looked at herself in a mirror, she, too, would be green, and she would feel like being sick at her stomach again. She had been sick already that morning, for the first time in a week, and it had frightened her; they had all been so sure she was going to get well. It had happened while she was in the bathroom, washing her face and hands, and she had not told anyone but Maud, because they would only put her back to bed and leave her and return to Pierce. This summer, more than ever, she was afraid of being forgotten, of Pierce's having all the love. Her head ached as she and Maud sat in the shade—ached hotly, as if the sun touched it through the listless leaves. Now she almost wished they would come and take her away from there, and help her upstairs to her cool room. She would feel better in bed.

She and Maud sat in the shade of the maple and did not talk. The sky was pale. Huge, hot clouds appeared over the rim of the wooded hill across the pond but threw no relieving shadows. The two children heard a car come humming up the road and skid as it swerved in to the driveway. Nervously, they shifted in their chairs.

“That's another doctor,” Maud said.

“How do you know?”

“I heard them.”

“He's driving an M.G.,” said Mimi in a voice faint with excitement. “It's the second one I've ever seen in my whole life. Maud . . . I don't feel very well.”

“Shall I get them?” asked Maud.

“No, don't!”

From where they sat, they could see a man in a dark suit unfold himself from the low black car. They were too far from the house to see him well, but they could see that he was very tall. As he strode across the porch, whose level lines seemed to waver, blurring him into the heat, their father came out of the house to meet him. Then their mother came, too, and they all hurried toward the front door. It was a remote scene, only half real to the little girls, like one of their father's movies, running too fast and badly focussed: three grownups, each one trying to make the others go in first, and, finally, all three of them crowding in at once.

Mimi and Maud sat very still in the green shade. Time did not seem to pass. Nearby, the hot day carried no sounds except the occasional long, dry note of a cricket in the tindery grass; but far down across the fields machinery rumbled like distant thunder, where men were haying in the heat.

Then came a sound from the silent house—a high, stretching scream that seemed to split the very day and, in some way, to sever Mimi from herself. Turning green-cold in the heat, she listened to the sound long after it had faded, then brought her stricken eyes to Maud's. Maud had gone green, too, in the still shade of the tree.

“What's happened? What are they doing to him, Maud? Is he going to die?”

“No,” whispered Maud. “He's only delirious.”

“What's delirious?”

“Out of his head,” said Maud shakily, and she picked Sandy up from the grass and put him in her lap, and tears crept from her eyes. At once, Mimi, too, gave in to the same hot relief. Separated from one another in the big deck chairs, they cried without letting themselves go—as they had once seen

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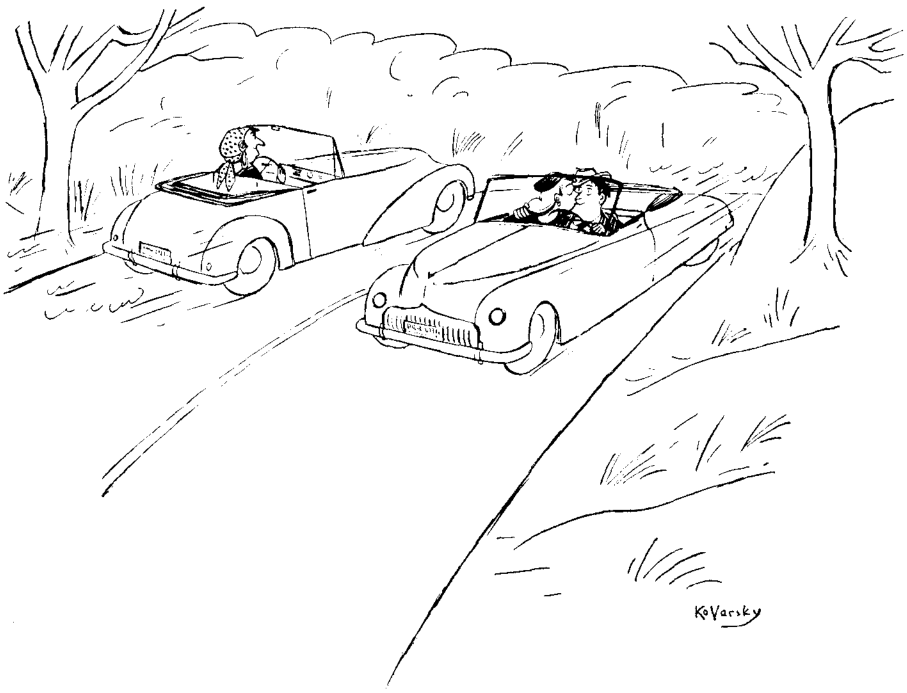


their mother cry in front of their father, hardly making a sound.

A LONG time later, when summer had been lost in September, and the corn in the far fields had been cut, and the first rains had come and gone, leaving the pond higher and the brook full, Mimi was allowed to see Pierce for the first time. Pierce was much better now; he was going to get well. Indeed, things were supposed to be so nearly the same again that Miss Dunston, with much whistling, had packed her bags after breakfast and would be leaving in her green Oldsmobile that afternoon. Yet, at the same time, Mimi knew that things were not the same—not quite the way they used to be—inside her. Now that the time had come, after so long, to visit Pierce, she was not even sure she wanted to. She remembered how mean he could be.

He sat among his pillows looking like a querulous little old man; his freckled skin was pale now from his being in bed so long, and fragile-looking; his crew cut had grown out so that his light hair stood up in small points all over his head. Punily, he sat surrounded by the presents people had sent him. Beside him sat his ancient plaster Mickey Mouse, whose ears were missing.

Cautiously, covetously, Mimi fingered a piece of his new Erector set.

"Don't touch it!" Pierce said.

"Why?"

"You might break it."

Miss Dunston came into the room then; they looked up at her in surprise, for she was clad in a blue knit bathing suit. "I'm going for a swim!" she announced. Her full mouth parted in a smile.

Mimi glanced at Pierce, who pressed his lips together and looked out the window and made no response.

"And if you're good kiddies," Miss Dunston said, swinging a rubber bathing cap by its strap, "you may watch me from the window. I can do a nifty swan dive."

She bounced out of the room in a way that reminded Mimi of a day that seemed long ago—Miss Dunston's first day with the family. Pierce and Mimi heard the screen door slam, as it used to slam all day long when they were well and forever doing things together outdoors.

Mimi sat down on the foot of Pierce's bed, near the window, where she could look out.

"Can you see?" she asked.

"I don't want to see," said Pierce. "Don't sit on my bed."

"Why?"

"Because I'm still sick," he said. "Besides, I don't want you to."

Mimi got off the bed and went to the window. After a minute she said, "She did a swan dive."

"So what?" he asked.

"Well, it was pretty," she said desolately. "And I know something you don't know."

"You think I care? What is it?" Adept, he could often trap Mimi into telling him her secrets before she knew it, and with no more than a direct question.

Innocently eager, she said, "The doctor from Children's Hospital had a black M.G. and I saw it."

Behind her, he was silent a minute, then asked keenly, "What year?"

"It— I don't know," she said.

"You don't even know! What good is it to know the makes of cars if you don't know their years? You're dumb," he said with a robust satisfaction. "Get out of the way, so I can see that old witch dive," he added.

She moved from the window and turned to gaze at his pale, freckled face. "Don't call her that," she said. "I like her. Sometimes I like her better than you."

"Stop leaning on the bedpost," he said. "If you're going to lean on my bed, you can get out."

"Oh, shut up!" she cried. "I'm not ever going to come back here again!" And she ran out of his room.

THE house was quiet, but it seemed to Mimi quiet in a different way from what it was earlier that summer. Her mother was in the city for the first time in weeks, having her hair done, and Maud had gone with her to buy more yarn. Except for Pierce, Mimi was the only one in the house. Alone, and with nothing to do, she felt aimless. She went downstairs and out the front door and on into the sunlight beyond the porch. In her bare feet, she wandered down the cool grass of the hill and stopped at the edge of the pond; its surface was dark in places, where afternoon breezes played. Miss Dunston, on the lawn, was bending over, drying her glistening body with one of the guest bath towels.

"Did you see me dive?" she asked.

"Yes," said Mimi. "It was pretty."

"I used to go with a lifeguard," explained Miss Dunston. "He taught me how."

She flipped the towel over her shoulder; together, then, she and Mimi sauntered toward the house.

"Are you sorry you're leaving?" Mimi asked her.

"Frankly, no," said Miss Dunston. "Little Brother was not an easy patient. But one of these days it may not be his world."

"When?" asked Mimi.

"Now, that I couldn't say," said Miss Dunston with an air of withdrawal.

"I love Pierce," said Mimi, "but I like you better. Could you write to me, Miss Dunston, if I write to you? I may be a trained nurse, too, someday—if I don't marry and have babies."

Miss Dunston flicked back her loose, gleaming hair. "Oh?" she asked, remote.

And Mimi then said, with low conviction, "Do you know why Pierce hates me? It's because he knows he can't ever have babies and I can."

But Miss Dunston did not hear this. "Heavens!" she said, and her voice fell to a stage whisper as they walked slowly up the hill. "Will you look? He's peeking at us from his window."

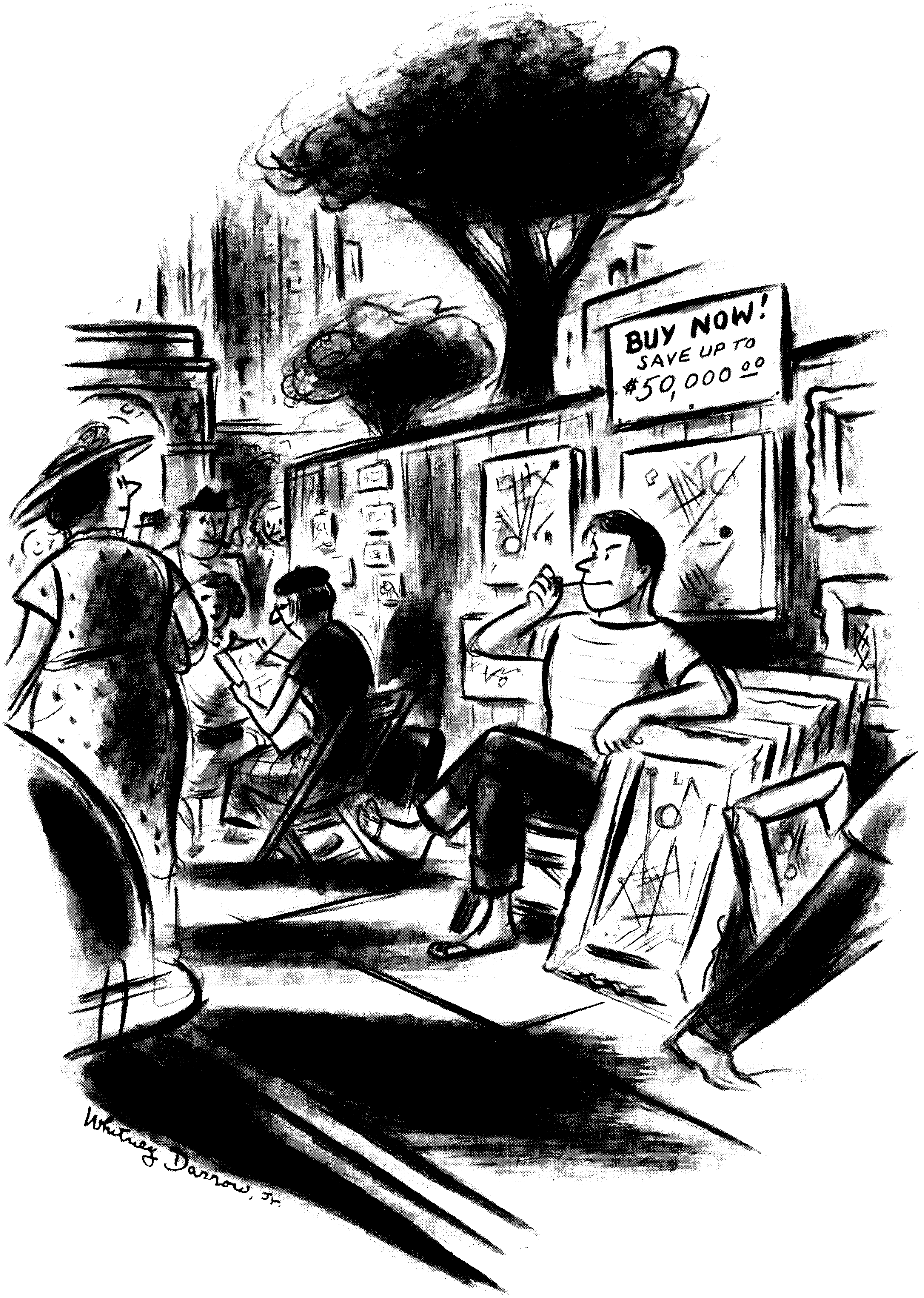
But he was hardly peeking. Rather, he dominated the frame of the upstairs window, and his distant gaze, his diminutive maleness, in dim shadow behind the window's wire screen, seemed to concentrate downward upon the two of them—on the arm of the young woman thrown in careless protection about the shoulders of the little girl. He was there, duskily, behind the screen, but then, when Mimi raised her hand instinctively to wave, Pierce, as though her gesture had been a farewell he would not recognize, suddenly disappeared—left the dark, framed square of the window as vacant as if they had only imagined catching that glimpse of him.

—SARAH FAY

◆

She felt Richard's eyes walking across the room after her like a stalking lion, and sat down at the piano very quickly and felt the hot breath of the lion as he sniffed at her legs.—*"The Golden Sleep," by Vivian Connell.*

Better fire off your gun, lady. And watch where you step.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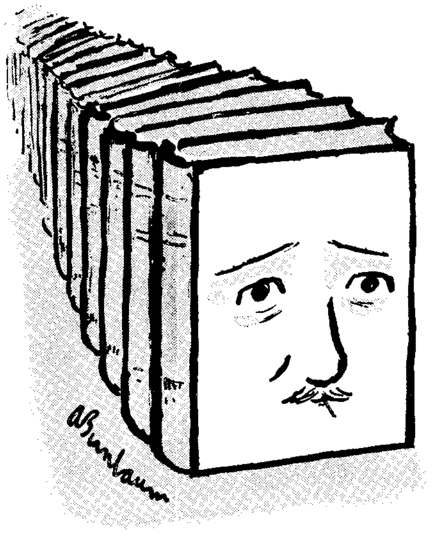


PROFILES

TWO AUTHORS IN AN ATTIC—II

IN the field of mystery fiction, John Dickson Carr, who also writes as Carter Dickson, holds a lofty and commanding position. As of a month ago, he had published forty-nine much-praised mystery novels, a factual account of a true murder case, a costume novel drenched with blood, and a biography of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. He produces at the steady clip of four books a year, to the cheerful despair of his colleagues, whose dreams of overhauling him resemble the ambitions of racing greyhounds in pursuit of the pilot rabbit. Though outpaced, the members of Carr's craft regard him fondly. Three years ago, upon his return from a seventeen-year sojourn in England, they elected him president of the Mystery Writers of America, a trade group greatly rent by squabbling. It was Carr's pleasure, while serving a year's term as president, to add coals to the blazing fires. He has a dramatic, mildly spastic platform manner, not unlike that of the late Sir Henry Irving, and he enjoys wringing emotion, however violent, from a crowd. (Carr's theatrical gifts derive from his early childhood, when his father, a Pennsylvania lawyer and congressman, would stand him on the dinner table, while entertaining guests like William Jennings Bryan, and make him recite Shakespeare.) "For shame!" he'd cry at one of the monthly club meetings, held here at the Fontainebleau Restaurant. "Fie on this writing to please the public! Write for yourselves alone. Are you artists or cowards?" The members, dangerously stung, would leap to their feet shouting "How do you expect us to make a living?" and other pertinent remarks, and Carr would continue his goading. "It amused me to watch their congested faces," he says. "It's a healthy thing for writers to get worked up. It isolates the pressures."

Paradoxically, more than half the members of the Mystery Writers of America prefer the term "detective novel" to "mystery novel." Carr's own definition of the latter is "a novel in which there is no mystery because the detective never sits still long enough to think he is mystified. If you see him in an armchair, it's because somebody has hit him on the head with a blackjack." On the other hand, a detective novel, according to Carr, is one involving a mysterious crime and setting forth all clues so clearly that the reader, if he has sufficient wit and curiosity, can solve the puzzle.

Those are the basic distinctions drawn by an expert. To the general public, other breakdowns are available. Crime books featuring the "private eye," or "peeper," have been much in vogue of late, partly owing to their high suitability for movie use. In this category, the plots are simple. An agitated client enters the dingy chamber of the private detective in question and engages him to unravel something pretty nasty. The client is then addressed with unbelievable rudeness, is told he will be charged around forty dollars a day for "expenses," is asked for a retainer of three thousand dollars, and, in addition, is told to keep his nose clean or he'll find himself in a peck of trouble. While the detective eyes him with suspicion, the client, having bought protection, leaves. He is murdered on his way down the street. As a rule, several members of his family are murdered, too, and a few of his friends, and the sum total of these disasters makes the detective so angry that he goes ahead and clears up the mystery—though a little tardily, from the client's standpoint. The solution is accomplished through a series of galvanic sorties too bewildering for the human brain to follow. The last third of the book is given over to explaining how it was done, and in the windup the detective marries the late client's niece.

On the more genteel side, Mary Roberts Rinehart, in America, and Agatha Christie, in England, have been pace setters. Writers of the Rinehart school establish a locale in Newport, or Bar Harbor, or some other fashionable center, and devote considerable space to séances. The murderer is the butler. For the most part, the characters are so relentlessly upper-class that if it becomes necessary to identify a maidservant by name, it is usually explained that she has royal blood on her mother's side. The murder is done for pecuniary reasons, involving an abstracted will, and the final explanation leaves several stray ends dangling in the supernatural. "Then what was it that caused the curtains to tremble?" inquires Dick Goodall (Yale, "Bones"), and his aunt, who was shot at but missed, replies softly, "I suppose we shall never know." In these novels, from one to five persons are living in secret compartments opening off the central staircase. In England, Miss Christie and her disciples have immortalized the sinister tennis party. Ten guests who detest each other cordially arrive at a country house on Thursday night for a long weekend. The atmosphere is so charged with peeve, irritation, jealousy, and boredom that it is no great surprise to anyone, not excluding the reader, when the group begins to be chopped off one by one. The murderer, Major Peavine, a man whose conversational range extends from "Ho? Jolly good. Quite" to "Dashed bounder. Mean to say!," is launched on his program of multiple carnage largely by accident, and, the implication is, should probably be forgiven. To the Major's dismay, the guests include a Colonel Burke-Wynkoop, who, in one of the dirtiest episodes in British military history, stole Peavine's gem of a batman when they were "out there," or serving in the Indian Army. The theft has been preying on the Major's mind for thirty years, and at last he is able to square the account, with a polo mallet, and have several cadavers left over.

The British influence is strongly felt in John Dickson Carr, who has explored the best English avenues and opened a number of new ones, chilly in character. He has not, for example, ignored the tennis party, obviously a first-rate device for assembling a quorum of suspects. In "The Problem of the Wire Cage," he kills Frank Dorrance, a loathsome youngster, on the court itself, a new wrinkle briskly applauded in the mystery world. Carr's principal deviation from the English school is his preoccupation with spooks. Witchcraft and demonology have high priority in his literary arsenal. It is Carr's Halloween mind that sets him apart from his guild. He is unable to read of the simplest unattended death without hearing a faint chorus of incantations. On any moonlit night, he would scarcely be surprised to find a whiskered band of druids practicing their happy rites in Central Park. In his "Below Suspicion," the law-abiding characters, in present-day England, run up against a society of practicing witches as cohesive and successful as the Garment Workers' Union. "Satanism," observes the author at one point. "The flesh and the devil. Black candles burning at a human altar, under a reversed cross. Red garters and laces and strings, withered with the evil of the past."

Carr's women represent an important contribution to mystery literature. "I can't stand these anemic, dimensionless, overcivilized heroines," he says. "Women ought to be healthy and ripe." Perhaps because of his long residence abroad, he has a more candid attitude toward sex than most American mystery writers. Carr's women love life; their sweaters are full, their blood warm. In "Night at the Mocking Widow," he establishes the rounded appearance of Joan Bailey with a quick, apt simile. " 'Listen, my wench,' " says Sir Henry Merrivale, "frankly looking her up and down. 'Did anybody ever tell you you've got a figure that would make Aphrodite look like a laundry bag in a thunderstorm?' " Then Miss Bailey meets the local vicar on the inevitable tennis court: " 'Good,' said the Rev. J. Cadman Hunter to himself. It is possible that he was much attracted by the blue-eyed brown-haired Joan. She wore shorts and a sleeveless blouse, which . . . still, it is possible he did not even notice this." In "Below Suspicion," Carr's chief female character, Joyce, a girl with a winner of a body, turns out to be the witches' leader and a pious devotee of organized sex orgies. She comes within an ace of seducing Patrick Butler, a lawyer-detective:

> Joyce also stood up. They were so close they could almost have touched each other. Joyce moved closer.
>
> "Oh? What did you dream?"
>
> "I dreamed I was kissing you, just as I kissed Lucia before that."
>
> "Only kissing?" murmured Joyce. "How tame your dreams must be."

Butler, who is torn between taking a cold shower and hearing more, is saved when Joyce, unstable, like so many witches, breaks off and shoots him in the chest.

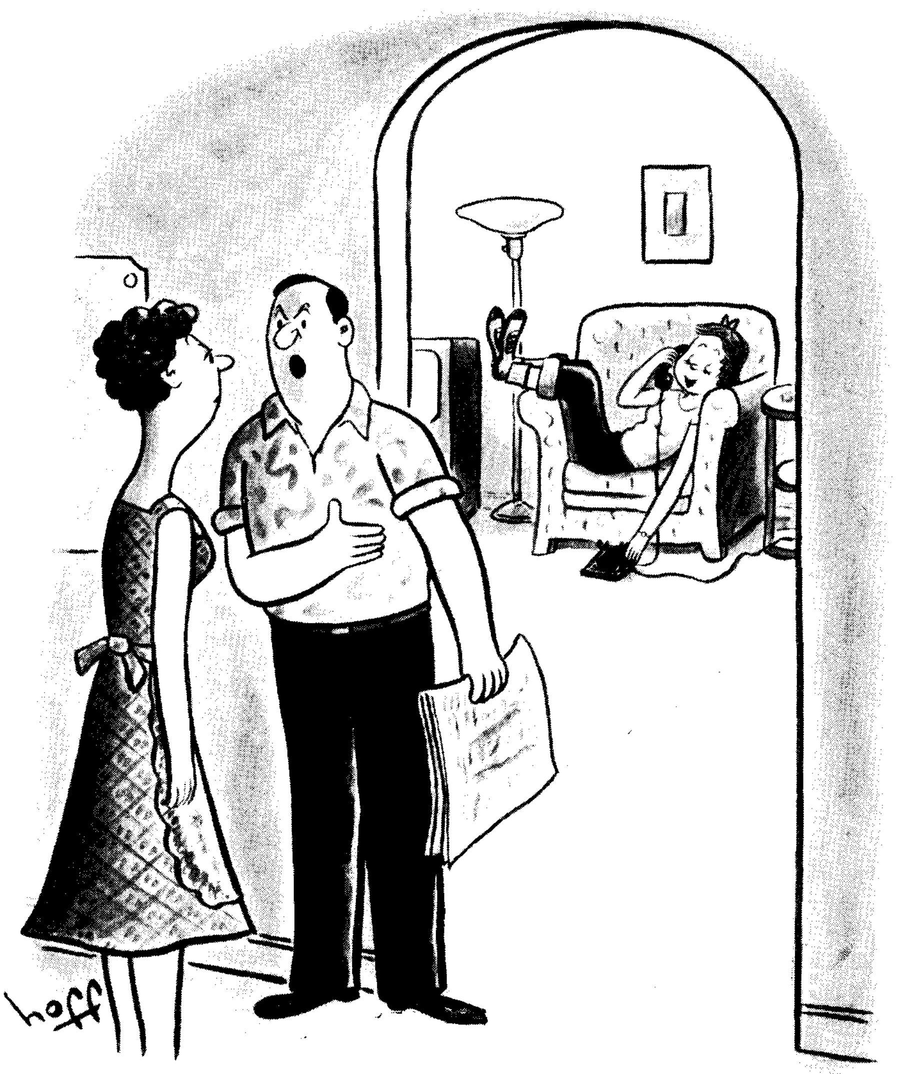
Carr's two detectives—Dr. Gideon Fell (John Dickson Carr) and Sir Henry Merrivale (Carter Dickson)—are violently different types. Fell is wildly eccentric, though dignified; Merrivale is a rowdy buffoon, given to low-grade profanity and pratfalls in the public square. "Fell is G. K. Chesterton, of course," says Carr. "Chesterton and his Father Brown series were idols of my boyhood. When I got going good, I decided to create a detective in the great man's image." In "The Man Who Could Not Shudder," Carr presents Fell in a few graphic sentences: "Vast and beaming, wearing a box-pleated cape as big as a tent, he sat in the center of the gaudy swing with his hands folded over his crutch stick. His shovel hat almost touched the canopy overhead. His eyeglasses were set precariously on a pink nose; the black ribbon of these glasses blew wide with each vast puff of breath which rumbled up from under his three chins, and agitated his bandit's moustache. But what you noticed most was the twinkle in his eye. A huge joy of life, a piratical swagger merely to be hearing and seeing and thinking, glowed from him like steam from a furnace. It was like meeting Father Christmas or Old King Cole."

Sir Henry Merrivale, or H. M., a bald, pigeon-toed, barrel-shaped man with "a lofty, lordly sneer," may be Carr's favorite of his two detectives. "He's a composite," says Carr. "There's a lot of Churchill in him, and some other people I know in England, and possibly even a little of me." Merrivale is constantly finding himself in a position of exploded dignity. In one book:

> H. M., his Panama hat crushed over his eyes, lifted both fists to heaven. From his lips issued such a torrent of profanity, such a picturesque arrangement of obscenities, that upper windows flew up along the street like a trick effect in a musical revue.
>
> "I beg of you!" moaned Danvers.
>
> "——!" said the great man.

Sir Henry's peculiarities, Carr feels, provide an unusual contrast to the behavior one would associate with the holder of "one of England's oldest baronetcies."

The creation of a memorable detective must involve a combination of ingenious mannerisms. Sherlock Holmes and his cocaine, his scraping at the violin ("he could play pieces, and difficult pieces"), his use of a Persian slipper as a repository for shag, his experiments with



"*Seems like only yesterday we couldn't wait to hear her first word.*"

REACTIONARY ESSAY ON APPLIED SCIENCE

I cannot love the Brothers Wright.
Marconi wins my mixed devotion.
Had no one yet discovered flight
Or set the air waves in commotion,
Life would, I think, have been as well.
That also goes for A. G. Bell.

What I'm really thankful for, when I'm cleaning up after lunch,
Is the invention of waxed paper.

That Edison improved my lot
I sometimes doubt, nor care a jitney
Whether the kettle steamed, or Watt,
Or if the gin invented Whitney.
Better the world, I often feel,
Had nobody contrived the wheel.

On the other hand, I'm awfully indebted
To whoever it was dreamed up the elastic band.

Yes, pausing grateful, now and then,
Upon my prim, domestic courses,
I offer praise to lesser men—
Fultons unsung, anonymous Morses—
Whose deft and innocent devices
Pleasure my house with sweets and spices.

I give you, for instance, the fellow
Who first had the idea for Scotch Tape.

I hail the man who thought of soap,
The chap responsible for zippers,
Sun lotion, the stamped envelope,
And screens, and wading pools for nippers,
Venetian blinds of various classes,
And bobby pins and tinted glasses.

De Forest never thought up anything
So useful as a bobby pin.

Those baubles are the ones that keep
Their places, and beget no trouble,
Incite no battles, stab no sleep,
Reduce no villages to rubble,
Being primarily designed
By men of unambitious mind.

You remember how Orville Wright said his flying machine
Was going to banish war?

Let them on Archimedes dote
Who like to hear the planet rattling.
I cannot cast a hearty vote
For Galileo or for Gatling,
Preferring, of the freaks of science,
The pygmies rather than the giants

(And from experience being wary of
Greek geniuses bearing gifts),

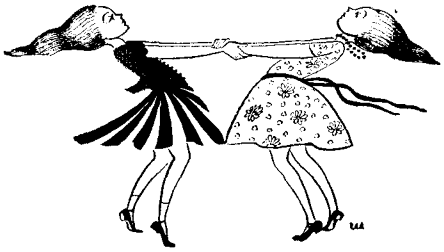
Deciding, on reflection calm,
Mankind is better off with trifles:
With Band-Aid rather than the bomb,
With safety match than safety rifles.
Let the earth fall or the earth spin!
A brave new world might well begin
With no invention
Worth the mention
Save paper towels and aspirin.

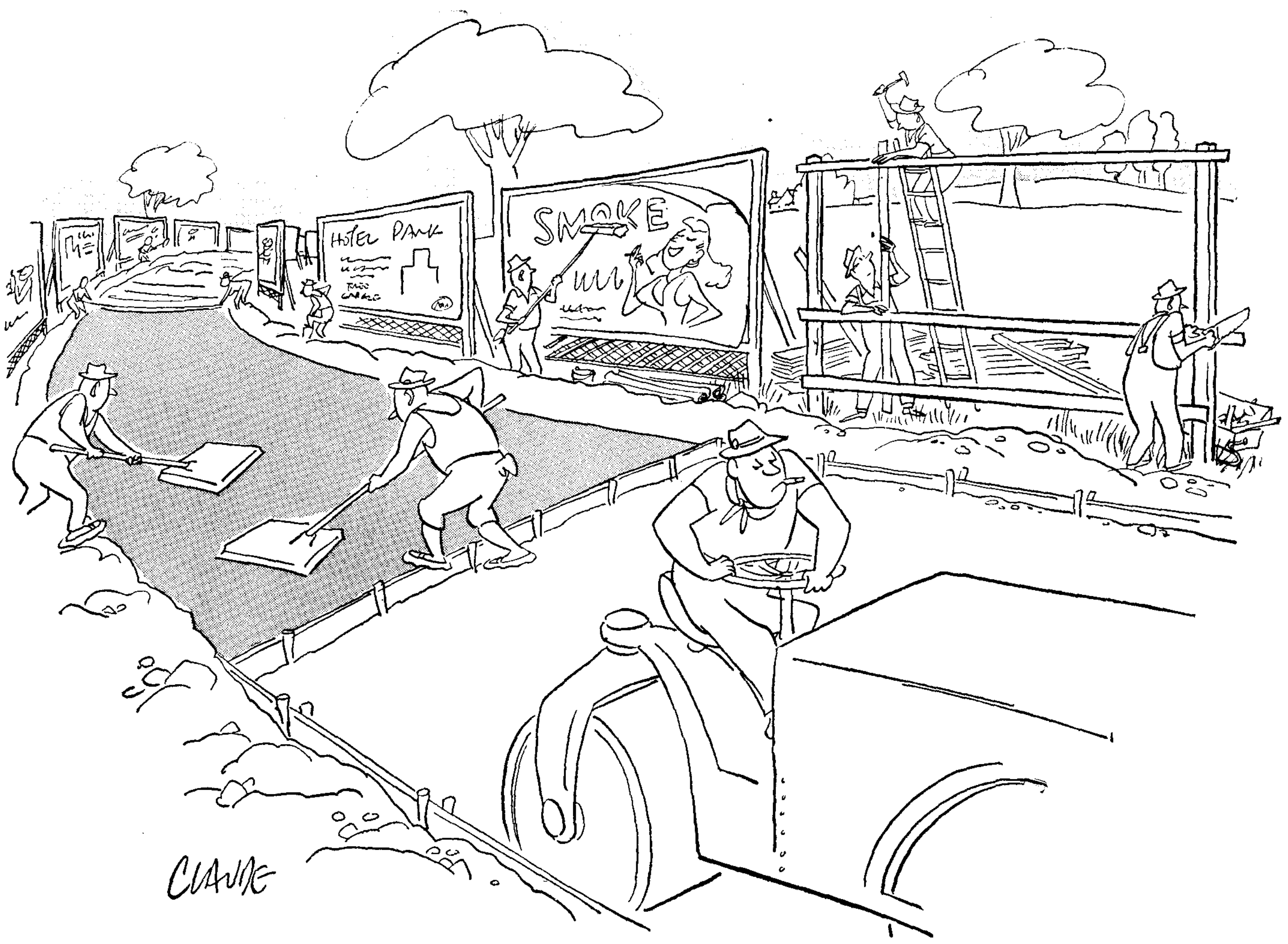
Remind me to call the repairman
About my big new automatically defrosting refrigerator
with the built-in electric eye.
—PHYLLIS McGINLEY

• •

chemicals, his indoor practice with a revolver, set the stage for the lively band that has followed. Poe's Dupin, who preceded Holmes, and whose birth, in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," in *Graham's Magazine*, in 1841, launched the modern detective story, was a comparatively normal man, with only extra-sensitive powers of ratiocination to give him distinction. In the years between Poe and Doyle, the French writer Emile Gaboriau took the field with a pair of detectives—M. Lecoq, a professional, and Père Tabaret, an amateur—who were somewhat friskier than Dupin, and the Englishman Wilkie Collins produced the first full-length detective novel in English, "The Moonstone," starring one Sergeant Cuff. Most mystery writers today consider this book the preëminent classic in its category.

The sensational popularity of Sherlock Holmes, beginning with "A Study in Scarlet," in 1887, has been skillfully described by John Dickson Carr in his biography of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, published in 1949. After Holmes, the spreading rash of detective stories returned to America—fairly quiescent since Poe—in 1907, with the writing of "The Thinking Machine," by Jacques Futrelle. It was early in the twentieth century that Mary Roberts Rinehart, combining detection and mystery, established a positive trend in this country, and a couple of decades later Dashiell Hammett, an ex-Pinkerton agent, introduced the unsentimental, skull-cracking note that has been so grievously imitated. Despite the most frenzied and laudable efforts, nobody since Doyle has been able to create a detective as appealingly human as Holmes. Experts, attempting to assay the peculiar magic of the stringy figure in the deerstalker cap, agree in general that it is an air of comfort at 221b Baker Street, of sport for the sake of English chivalry rather than for cash, that gives Holmes one of his extra measures of verve. And when Holmes extracts a check for six thousand





pounds from the Duke of Holdernesse (in "The Adventure of the Priory School") for telling the nobleman where he has secreted his own son, the reader accepts it in the spirit of unmercenary good fun. Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot, though able, is an excitable Belgian given to making irritating references to his "little gray cells." Dorothy L. Sayers, another of the leaders of the present-day English school, solves her highly regarded problems through the odd offices of Lord Peter Wimsey, an inflexibly flippant young man who looks like a film actor and wears a monocle. In this country, Rex Stout has fashioned perhaps the most eccentric detective on record, in the person of Nero Wolfe, a man so grossly overweight that he is unwilling to vacate his premises for even the simplest investigation. Devoted to horticulture and to the sedentary life, Wolfe cleans up messes, aggravated by police fumbling, through those incandescent flashes of divination that Doyle attributed to Sherlock Holmes' lazy brother, Mycroft.

WHEN Carr was a very young man, his paramount social ambition was to meet Chesterton, whose vivid swashbuckling was adding lustre to the English literary scene. When Carr was an older young man, the meeting was booked, and the place set, but it fell through, under tragic circumstances. The broken date represents one of the toughest blows of Carr's life to date. He had won the privilege through his literary success in England, where he moved, with his British-born wife, in 1931, in an effort to get close to the masters, dead and living, of his craft.

The couple first settled in Bristol, where Mrs. Carr's family resided. Carr, with an American mystery-novel triumph, "It Walks by Night," to his credit, began the series of subsequent books that rapidly brought him to the attention of the innermost circles of mystery connoisseurs, both domestic and foreign. "I'd arranged for two American publishers before I left—Harper's for John Dickson Carr and William Morrow for my new pen name of Carter Dickson," he says. "In addition, two British publishers agreed to take me on—Hamish Hamilton for Carr and William Heinemann for Dickson. The American firms were sending me a total of two hundred and twenty-five dollars a month to live on, and we made out. We dined on black tea, had very little heat, and no social life. But I fired off the books at the rate of four a year, and presently Dorothy Sayers gave me a whopping, magnificent review in the *Sunday Times* in London. I was established overnight. Sales began to boom on all four fronts, and they've kept on going."

In the early days of Carr's English travail, his recreational life consisted of frequent trips to Dartmoor, where he got in the mood by staring at the prison and walking in solitude over the mottled barrens. As Holmes had once camped out on the moor near the great Grimpen Mire, Carr sat with a box lunch in the vestigial dwelling places of Neolithic man. Then, infused with a sufficient dosage of the horrors, he would make haste for home and set to work before his humor brightened. Mrs. Carr, who, socially, regarded Neolithic man as a closed book, preferred to spend her time with his present-day descendants, and she usually visited her family. Not long after Miss Sayers' laudatory piece in the *Sunday Times*, the Carrs moved to London, and Carr, his star in the ascendant, took his place in the literary life of the British capital. He was elected to the Savage and Garrick clubs, and, at last, was made a member of the ultimate in mystery writers' groups, the small and snobbish Detection Club in London. Chesterton then reigned as president, handing down decisions on how books were to be written, how the plots unfolded, how the characters drawn, how the standards uplifted in general. Carr put on his best suit for his presentation to his hero, but Chesterton died shortly before the meeting. In all his appearances at the club thereafter, Carr has tried to behave in a manner that he believes Chesterton would have approved.

The Detection Club is ritualistic in form, verging on the Oriental. At the annual initiation for new members, by sickly candlelight, a black-robed skull-bearer marches down a central aisle, exhibiting his grisly offering. Then, a nice emotional balance between this world and the next having been struck, the president goes into a mumbo-jumbo stating the club's creed, in the form of questions, which the initiates, under oath, answer in mournful concert. Among the questions, the following are pivotal: "Do you solemnly swear never to conceal a vital clue from a reader?" "Will you honor the King's English?" "Do you promise that your detectives shall well and truly detect the crimes presented to them, using those wits which it may please you to bestow upon them and not placing reliance on nor making use of Divine Revelation, Feminine Intuition, Jiggery-Pokery, Coincidence or the Act of God?" "Do you promise to observe a seemly moderation in the use of Gangs, Conspiracies, Death-Rays, Ghosts, Hypnotism, Trap-Doors, Chinamen, Super-Criminals and Lunatics; and utterly and for ever to forswear Mysterious Poisons unknown to Science?" Chesterton, during his polychromatic tenure, had two basic precepts for his flock: (1) the detective story should be carefully written, and (2) it should play strictly fair with the reader in the matter of clues.

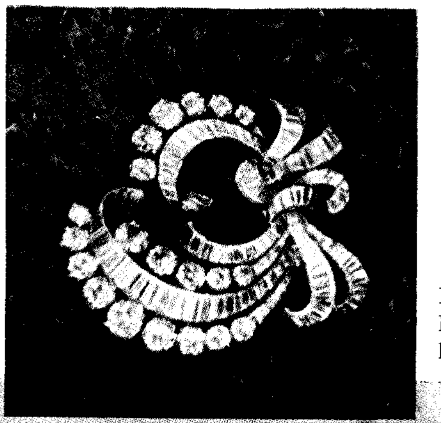
Carr feels that these high-minded standards have elevated the whole field of English detective fiction. With the shade of Chesterton over his shoulder, he toils with dreadful anxiety to make his work both literary and explicable. First, in the preparation of a new book, he draws up what he calls a "clue outline," marking points in the narrative at which he plans to plant the signposts to the guilt of whichever fiend he is building. Then, with elaborate pains, he makes working sketches of the characters, sometimes promoting minor players to star roles, and the reverse, as he goes, depending on how they respond to the call to creation. He jots down snatches of dialogue as he visualizes the characters and hears their speech in his mind. Plotting is easy for Carr—he habitually sees the entire network of human relations as a slough of intrigue—and the blocking out of the separate scenes is perhaps his favorite chore. He hates the actual writing, however, and does it in anguish, emerging from each long session hollow-eyed and spent. As one of his detective-writer friends has remarked, "This is a hell of a tough rap for a man who has to write four books a year to stay happy."

In a recent novel, Carr expressed, through a character, his philosophy of living, working, and success:

> "... scrimp and save, scrimp and save, to the meanest little farthing that'll get you steerage passage through the Malay Straits or a bug-filled room in San Francisco! But that's not the way to do it.... If you can't afford to travel first-class, with special tips for special favors, then don't travel at all.
>
> "That means work. And rightly! At my job, it means work, work, grind, grind, grind, eighteen hours a day or twenty if you can stand it. Never look away; never look up. No other activities except books; no holidays; who wants a silly trip to St. Ives when you're headed for the Mountains of the Moon? Hit 'em with

"He calls her the Muse of Free Speech."

ELEGANT, EXCLUSIVE ENJOYMENT



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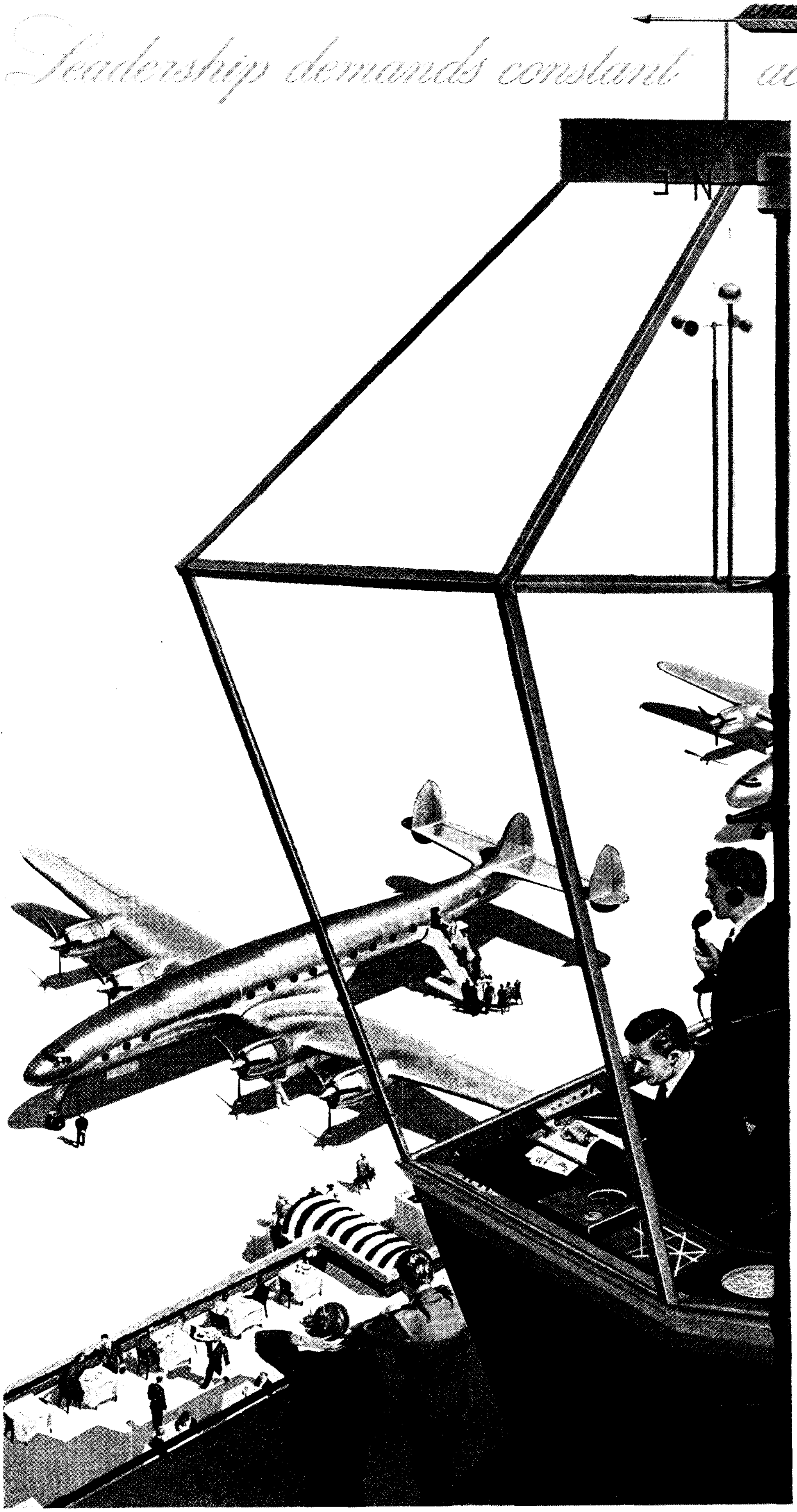

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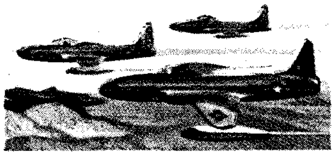

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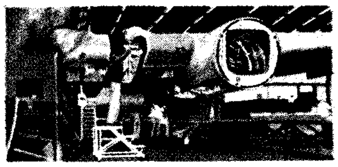

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During the time when Carr was grinding away at books, he drew severe lines in his own reading. He is intolerant of "high-brow" writers and critics and their sycophants. He clings to the belief that a good story is necessary to a good novel, and he abhors the pretentious obscurity that he thinks has crept into literature. His detective creation Sir Henry Merrivale has his say on the subject in "Night at the Mocking Widow":

> "And speaking of windows, here are these three Russian crutch-walkers on the table by the bed. We'd better get rid of 'em now."
>
> There was a whir of leaves and then three separate thuds as Dostoevski, Tolstoy and Chekhov flew out of the open window and struck the bole of an oak tree.
>
> "The idea is," explained H.M., "I want you to read some fellers named Dumas and Mark Twain and Stevenson and Chesterton and Conan Doyle. They're dead, yes; but they can still whack the britches off anybody at tellin' a story."

ENGLAND took profitable advantage of Carr's story-telling ability during the war. He was assigned by the B.B.C. to dig up and dramatize for the radio morale-boosting feats of counter-espionage and general underground activity. In making the assignment, the B.B.C. was fortunately unconscious of the snowball of force it was releasing for the public weal. Carr continually got the B.B.C. in hot water, of a pleasant sort, by scooping the press on important stories. He circulated among the underground folk like a wartime Warner Brothers blonde. Most of his stories ran along the lines of his own fictional situations. On one occasion, he presented a corking program about a supposedly hunchbacked Pole, who went around with a walkie-talkie secreted on his back and actually had no deformity. Again, he told of a blind French fiddler whose fiddle bow was a gun and who was given to interrupting melodies to knock off stray members of the German occupational force. The B.B.C. got especially warm responses to Carr's series on the Belgian underground, which appears to have been among the sprightliest in Europe. In Brussels, the German masters and their collaborationists published a daily paper, emetic in tone, called *Le Soir*. The underground, rounding up the best journalistic brains in the country, began to sprinkle here and there a facsimile impossible, at first glance, to distinguish from the original. It appeared sporadically and threw the city into a violent uproar. The front page would perhaps be given over to a rousing description, with nicely faked pictures, of a narcotics raid involving the local gauleiter's wife. Once, it ran a spirited account of a disagreement and fist fight between Hitler and Mussolini. Occasionally, it reported a German surrender. The residents of Brussels, entering into the spirit of the broadcasts, besieged the German headquarters with calls, rioted in the streets, and created general havoc.

Carr received one small official reprimand during his B.B.C. days, as the luckless victim of intramural joking. One of his programs, which he called "Girls at the Guns," featured a girl radio "talker," or plane spotter, at work in the days of the Battle of Britain. The talkers used a code, a kind of gibberish. Doing his reporting in the field, crawling from talker to talker in the midst of heavy raids, Carr faithfully copied off several sentences, realizing their splendid dramatic value. But he was unaware that the robust girl talkers, during lulls, relaxed with profanity of an exceptionally purple order. Carr's radio report, which proved to be intelligible to a great many people, started off with the code for "To hell with Hitler" and rapidly increased in eloquence. His script was called in for scrutiny, he was dressed down, and the script was returned with the red-pencilled notation "All right this time. Don't do it again."

Carr led a migratory sort of life in England during the war, for he was bombed out of three separate establishments. A fine house that he and his wife and their two small children moved into, at 118a Maida Vale, in 1940, was destroyed shortly thereafter. Having just sent the children out of London for safety's sake, Carr and his wife, who belonged to the school that advocated ignoring the bombs rather than diving underground, were seated in their living room, reading, when they heard a whistle, a heavy hiss, and a series of thunderclap concussions, and then found themselves on the floor, blinded by dust. The first thing Carr noticed when he got up and cleared his eyes was that they now had an uninterrupted view of their garden, the wall on that side being absent. Neither he nor his wife was injured, but the house was almost a total wreck. He removed the family's headquarters to Bristol, and his cottage there was hit, without serious

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consequences to the inhabitants, a month or so afterward. By this time, Carr had taken on a slight persecution complex, and he set himself up alone, to do his work, at the Savage Club. While he was sipping a whiskey sour at the bar one evening, at the club's most hallowed hour, a whacking great explosion shook the brotherhood, spilled several drinks, and tore out the wall behind the bar, leaving Carr and three or four other sippers staring off into space. The comments at the bar as the members viewed the spilled whiskey were, Carr believed, indicative of the impassioned British attitude in crises, and boded no good for the Hun. One fellow said, in an uncommonly loud voice, "Really, now!;" another remarked bitterly, "Scarcely done;" and there were additional indictments. To Carr, the episode represented another strong reminder that there will always be an England.

After seventeen years in that country, Carr would feel acutely deprived without an England. So steeped did he become in English ways that his speech has a faint Oxonian accent, his idiom is less American than English, and the bulk of his fictional works have to do with England. He says that the professional high point of his life to date was the richly English experience he had with the Doyle family while preparing his well-received biography of Sir Arthur. Carr and Adrian Conan Doyle, the writer's third son, first met casually, at a party, in 1941. Later, when the B.B.C. undertook a radio dramatization of "The Lost World," Adrian Conan Doyle asked that Carr be persuaded to act in an advisory capacity on the script. The two men became friendly, and it developed that the Doyle family, smarting because of what they considered an inadequate biography Hesketh Pearson had done of Sherlock Holmes' creator, were interested in having somebody write the definitive work. Carr, consulted about this, journeyed to Bignell Wood, Adrian's home, in the center of a gigantic forest, and made a preliminary survey. He was apprehensive about the touchy factor of spiritualism, which the Doyle family fervently embraces. "But see here," Carr kept saying. "I'm no spiritualist, you know. I'm open-minded about everything, I hope, but I'm no spiritualist." He had the calm assurances of Adrian Conan Doyle that his religious or metaphysical tastes would be of little moment in the preparation of the biography.

Carr spent a great deal of time in the homes of Sir Arthur's progeny. It was a delicate proposition. Late at night, the

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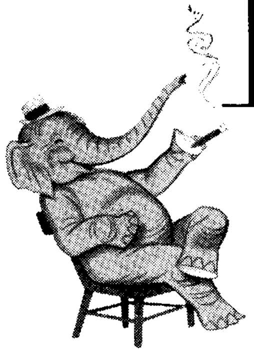

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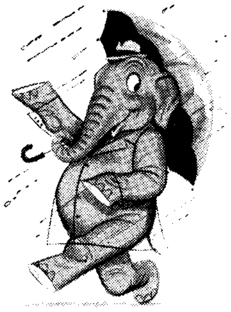

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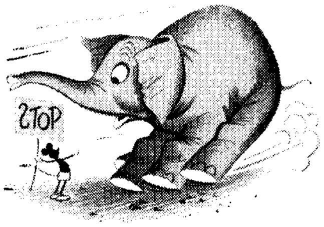

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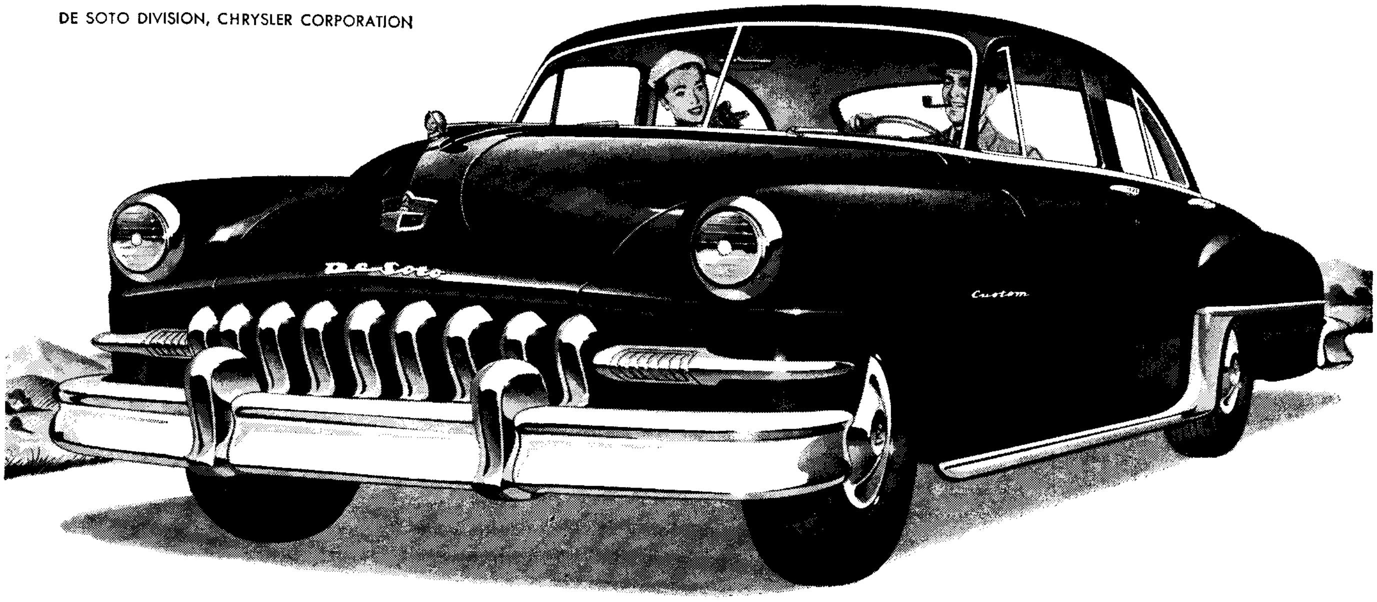

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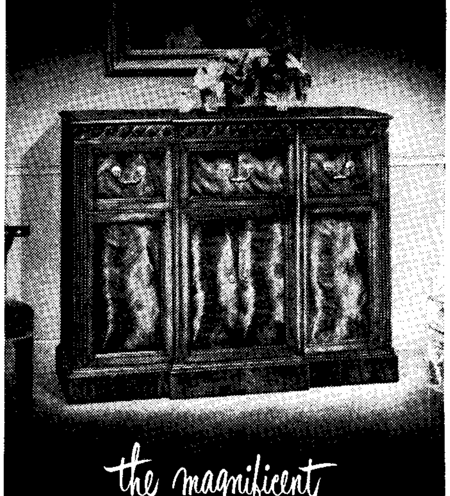
family would be seated in the library, say, and a banging noise would issue from the billiard room. "What's that?" one of the ladies might cry, springing up. "Dear me, do be seated," another member would say. "It's only Father looking for his pipe." "To be sure. Of course," Carr would echo heartily. "Sir Arthur looking for his pipe." And they would settle down again. It was often difficult, he recalls, when lowering himself into a chair, to resist arching back hastily and calling out, "Oh, beg pardon, Sir Arthur!" Carr has intense respect for all the Doyle family, and he undertook his biography with the idolatrous regard for Arthur Conan Doyle that almost every mystery writer has. The job represented, in fact, a mystery writer's dream of heaven. There were more than twenty trunkfuls of memorabilia and sixty scrapbooks covering Sir Arthur's life from the age of ten. Carr grazed in these pleasant pastures for a year, and became very close to the family. He learned about the members, dead and living, so intimately that when he met Denis Conan Doyle, another of the author's sons, some time after he'd started the project, he blurted out, "Oh, yes, I knew your father well."

The task, including research and writing, took Carr two years, an unprecedentedly long time for him to devote to a book. He was sorry to see it end, and he has kept up his association, through correspondence and visits, with the Doyle family. In the course of doing the book, he made several important discoveries, chief among them the fact that Sherlock Holmes' stout-hearted but unimaginative side-kick, Watson, was drawn from a counterpart in real life. In going through some old records, Carr found that Arthur Conan Doyle had belonged to, and taken an active part in, the Portsmouth Literary and Scientific Society, whose president was a Dr. James Watson. Carr was more or less prepared for some such revelation, for he, and many others, had long before noted the slip made by Watson's wife, in "The Man with the Twisted Lip," when she referred to her husband as James, instead of calling him by his correct name of John. Carr's discovery was greatly approved by the London press, and was made much of here in 1949, when Carr was guest of honor at a dinner given by the Baker Street Irregulars, a cult that assembles periodically to do posthumous homage to Doyle and dig frantically into his writings.

NOW in America, as before in England, Carr's energies are poured almost wholly into his writing. He



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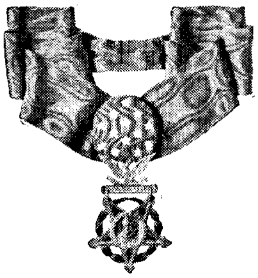

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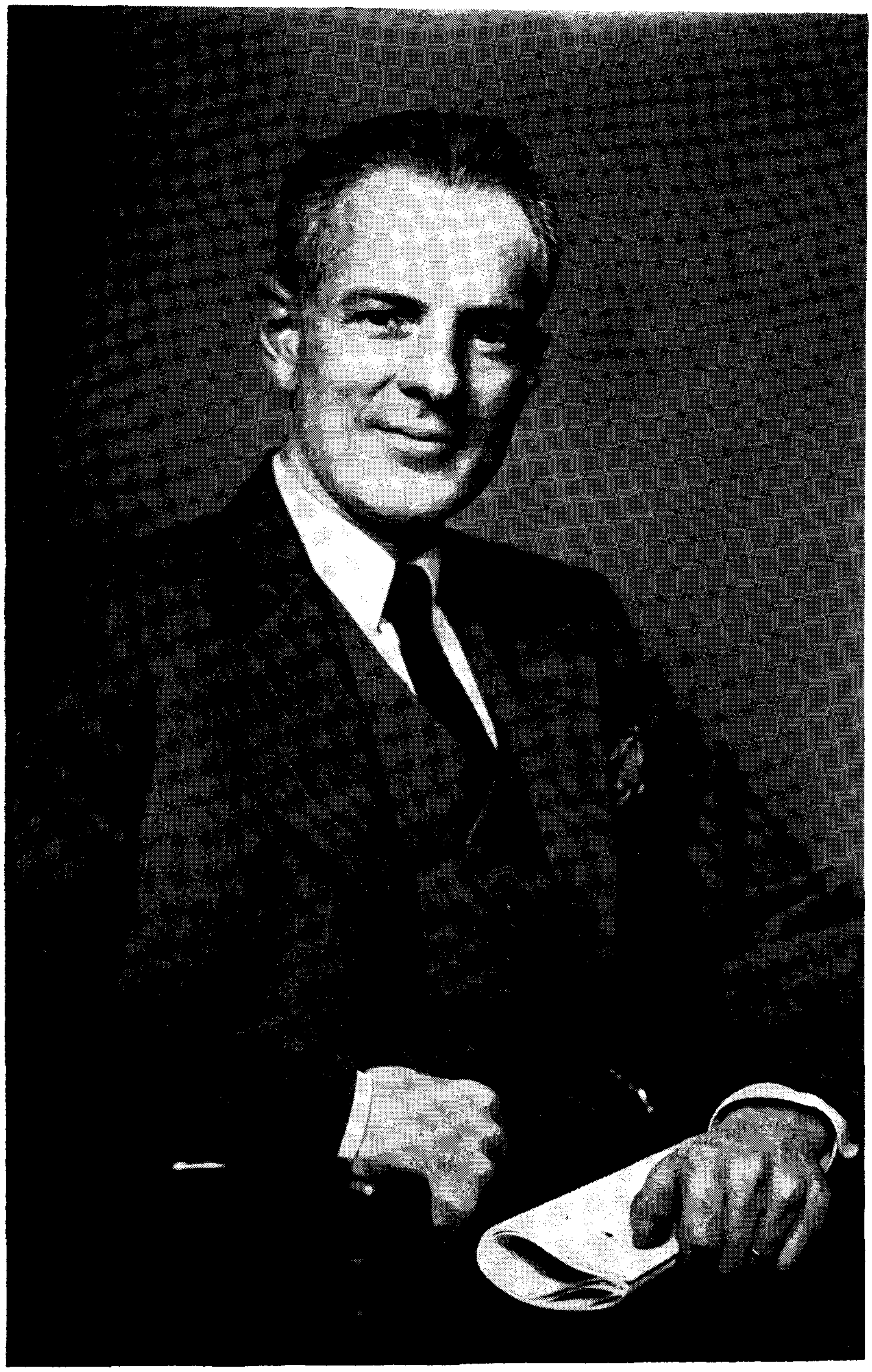

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works all day every day, including Sunday, and often far into the night. He and his wife and their three children live in a rambling, porch-encircled house he bought in Mamaroneck three years ago. He does all his writing in the attic. Sometimes at night, restless, divorced from the muse, he prowls dark, dingy alleys until dawn, hoping to stray into one of those inscrutable problems that rose continually in the lives of Holmes and Watson. But things untoward seldom happen to writers of fiction. On occasion, forcing the issue, he attends an autopsy at some doctor friend's; in England he was often welcomed at such dubious rites by the late Sir Bernard Spilsbury, for many years the public pathologist. Both Carr and his wife like mystery movies, and see a good many. As a rule, he writhes and jerks with irritation, ticking off the flaws and the falseness, the transparency of the plots. Recently, watching a murder film in which the central figure was laid low by "calomel" poisoning, he leaped to his feet and stamped out, muttering in tones audible several rows distant, "Impossible! Balderdash! They're trying to sell this rot to *me*?" As he passed a thunderstruck usher, he added, "No such poison."

Socially, Carr proceeds at a snail's pace, finding that the high gaiety of cocktail parties takes a reckless toll of his creative force. In Mamaroneck, he sees a few friends of congenial interests. Half of Ellery Queen lives nearby, and several other mystery writers, intact, live in the general area. They are mildly disapproving of a new literary bent toward costume novels that Carr shows, but they are reassured by his promise that each such book will contain a rousing mystery. There can be no question that the mysteries will be extraordinary and phantasmic. Carr feels that De Quincey showed an artist's appreciation of civilization's most damned and applauded act when he chose, for a title, "On Murder as One of the Fine Arts." If things go well, murder, in fancy dress, will out, with Carr, about four times a year, and society will be the richer for it.

—ROBERT LEWIS TAYLOR

(This is the second of two articles on Mr. Carr.)

•

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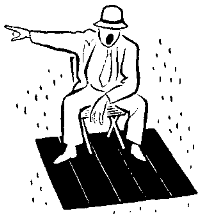

IN view of what went on during the National Singles Championships at Forest Hills, which finally wound up last week, weather having permitted, the U.S. Lawn Tennis Association's Ranking Committee will probably be assailed by even more than its usual amount of criticism and abuse when it gets out its national rankings late this year. The main cause of this anticipated turmoil is, of course, the fact that Frank Sedgman, who cannot be considered in the ranking because he is not an American, produced a streak of unbeatable tennis to carry off the title—making him the first Australian to win in the seventy-year history of the championships and the first foreigner to win since Fred Perry turned the trick in 1936. With Sedgman out, Victor Seixas, whom Sedgman trounced in the final, 6–4, 6–1, 6–1, might be said to have a slight edge on the three other claimants to the No. 1 ranking—Richard Savitt, Tony Trabert, and William Talbert. After all, Seixas got farther in the tournament than any other American, and ordinarily that would be enough to put him on top. But consider the case for Savitt: He won both the Wimbledon and the Australian championships this year, beating Sedgman in the latter, and seemed a not unlikely winner at Forest Hills until a leg infection slowed down his play, so that he could do little more than go through the motions in his semifinal match with Seixas. Trabert? He lost to Sedgman in the quarter-finals of the National, in a five-set match that might have gone either way right up to the end, and he was the only one of Sedgman's six opponents who took so much as a set from him. Trabert's record this year includes the Intercollegiate and the National Clay Court championships, as well as the Southampton Invitation, where he beat the country's No. 1, 2, and 4 players—Larsen, Flam, and Mulloy—in consecutive rounds. As for Talbert, he was put out in the fourth round at Forest Hills—by Sedgman—but he won the Eastern Grass Court Championship, the second most important outdoor event of the season to date, and he beat Sedgman in the process, thus becoming the only American to beat him in this country this year. As if this chaos around the No. 1 spot weren't enough to harass the committee members, the going doesn't get any easier farther down the list. Arthur Larsen, last year's champion, hasn't won a tournament since June, and has twice been beaten by players outside the first ten. Although he reached the semifinals at Forest Hills, he was flattened there by Sedgman in just forty-eight minutes, 6–1, 6–2, 6–0. He has, it is true, beaten both Gardnar Mulloy and Herbert Flam in tournaments this year, but they both have better all-round records than he has, and it is difficult to see how he can be ranked above them. Anyhow, this should indicate that life on the Ranking Committee isn't all caviar and crêpes Suzette.

FROM a competitive point of view, the play in the Singles Championships was, on the whole, disappointing. In the men's division, except for a first-round near upset of Seixas by unseeded Corporal Bernard Bartzen, of Texas, and a scare put into Hamilton Richardson in the second round by a comparative unknown named Larry Huebner, of California, the only really exciting match was the Sedgman-Trabert quarter-final. In this one, both competition and quality of play were on a very high level. The entire five sets were played at top speed, with both men following service to the net most of the time and earning points more often than they erred. The deciding difference in their games, I thought, was Trabert's inability to lob deeply enough. On at least a half-dozen occasions, he fed Sedgman lobs that went not much deeper than the service line and set up easy kills. That was his only apparent weakness, but it was all Sedgman needed.

Competition wasn't very evident in the women's play, either, until the semifinals, where Maureen Connolly, a sixteen-year-old Californian who looks like a pretty, animated doll, beat Doris Hart, the country's top-ranking active woman player and a heavy favorite to win the championship, 6–4, 6–4. Miss Connolly went on to take the final from Shirley Fry, seeded second, 6–3, 1–6, 6–4, and became the youngest player ever to hold the rank of national champion. To judge from the exhibition of nerve control she put on after dropping the second set in the final, she ought to remain a champion for a good many years. And to judge from the crowd's reaction, she ought to remain just about the most popular one, too. —P. W. W., JR.

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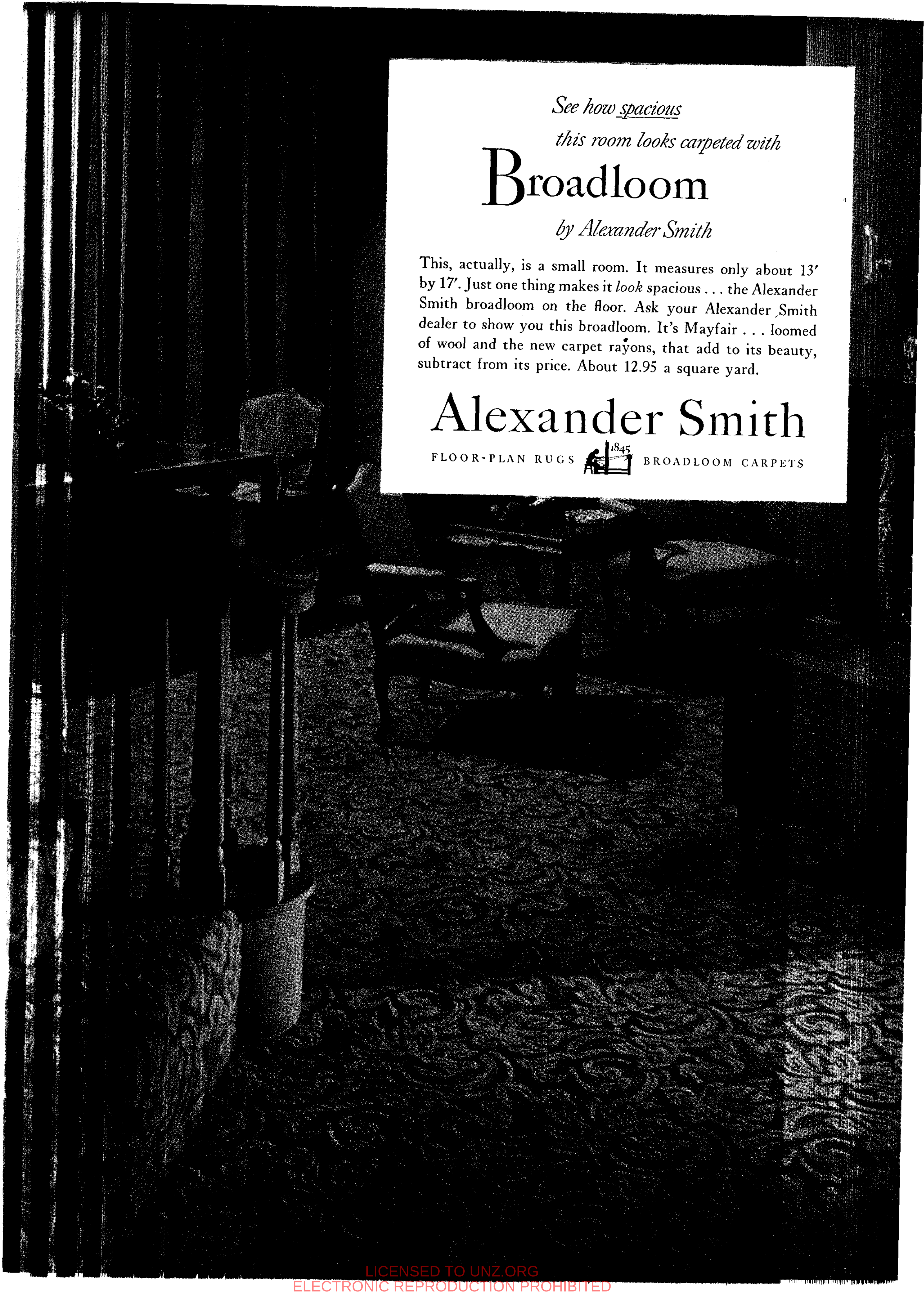

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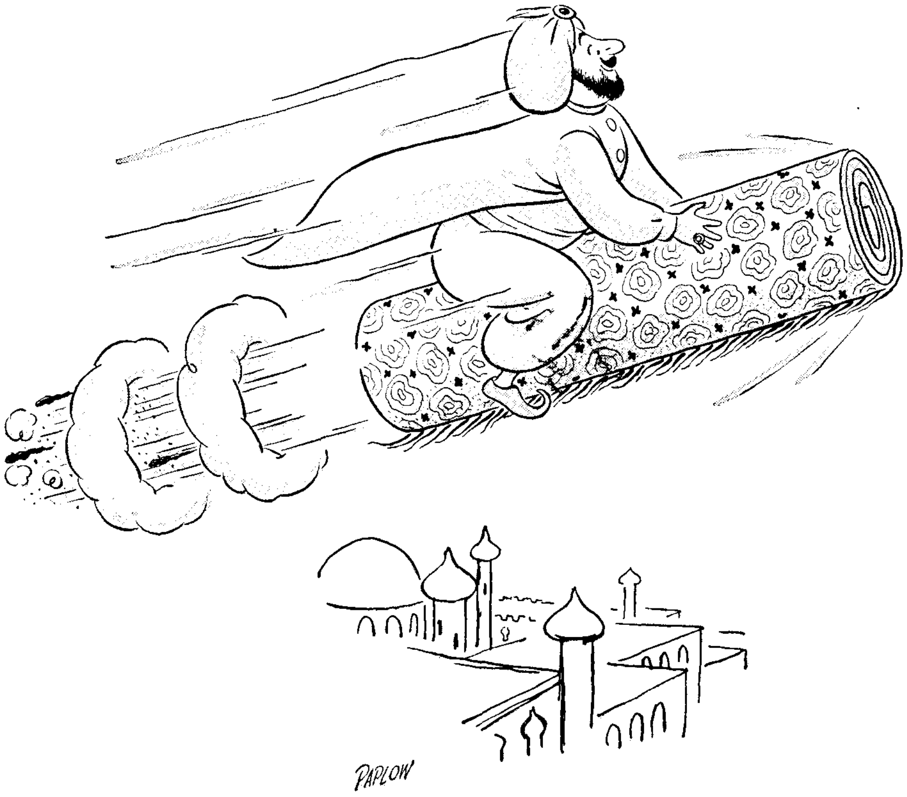
THE KITCHEN

SOMETIMES, on a Friday evening, I see our kitchen clearly again. I feel myself carried back to the Friday evenings at home, when, with the Sabbath at sundown, a healing quietness would come over Brownsville, the section of Brooklyn where we lived. It was the darkness and emptiness of the streets I liked most about Friday evening, as if, in preparation for that day of rest and worship the Jews greet "as a bride," that day when the very touch of money is prohibited, and all work, all travel, all household duties, even to the turning on and off of a light, Jewry had found its way past its tormented heart to some ancient, still center of itself. I waited for the streets to go dark on Friday evening as other boys waited for the Christmas lights. When I returned home from school after three, the warm odor of a coffee-cake baking in the oven and the sight of my mother on her hands and knees scrubbing the linoleum on the floor filled me with such tenderness that my senses reached out to embrace every single object in our household. One Friday, after a class in school spent on the voyages of Henry Hudson, I returned with the phrase "among the discoverers of the New World" singing in my mind as a theme for the Sabbath.

My great moment came at six o'clock, when my father, a house painter, would return from work, his overalls smelling faintly of turpentine and shellac, drops of silver paint still gleaming on his chin. Hanging his overcoat in the long, dark hall that led into our kitchen, he would leave in one pocket a folded copy of the *World*, and then everything that beckoned to me from that other hemisphere beyond the East River would start up from the smell of fresh newsprint and the sight of the globe on the front page. It was a paper that had special associations for me with the Brooklyn Bridge. They published the *World* under the green dome on Park Row, overlooking the bridge; the fresh salt air of New York Harbor lingered for me in the smell of paint and damp newsprint in the hall. I felt that my father brought the outside straight into our flat with each day's copy of the *World*. The bridge stood for freedom, the *World* for that rangy kindness and fraternalism and ease we found in Heywood Broun. My father would read aloud from "It Seems to Me" with a delighted smile on his face. "A very clear and courageous man!" he would say. "Look how he stands up for our Sacco and Vanzetti! A real social conscience, that man! Practically a Socialist!" Then, taking off his overalls, he would wash up at the kitchen sink, peeling and scraping the paint off his nails with Gold Dust Washing Powder as I poured it into his hands, smacking his lips and grunting with pleasure as he washed himself clean of the job at last, and making me feel that I was really helping him, that I, too, was contributing to the greatness of the evening and the coming day.

By sundown, the streets were empty, the lace curtains had been drawn, the world put to rights. Even the kitchen walls had been scrubbed, and now they gleamed in the light of the Sabbath candles. On the long white tablecloth were the "company" dishes, filled with gefüllte fish on lettuce leaves, ringed by red horseradish; sour and half-sour pickles; tomato salad, with a light vinegar dressing; chopped liver and white radishes in a bed of lettuce leaves; the long white *chalah*, the Sabbath loaf; chicken soup with noodles *and* dumplings; chicken, meat loaf, prunes, and sweet potatoes that had been baked all day into an open pie; compote of prunes and quince, apricots and orange rind; applesauce; a great brown cake filled with almonds, the traditional *lekach*—all surrounded by glasses of port wine, Seltzer bottles, with their nozzles waiting to be pressed, and a samovar of Russian tea, always served in tall glasses, with lemon slices floating on top. My father and mother sipped it in Russian fashion, through lumps of sugar held between the teeth.

Afterward, we went into the "dining room" and, since we were not particularly orthodox, allowed ourselves little pleasures outside the Sabbath rule—an occasional game of cassino at the dining-room table, on which we almost never dined, and listening to the Victrola. The evening was especially pleasant for me whenever the cousin who boarded with us had her two closest friends in after supper. All three were, like my mother, dressmakers, had worked with her in the same East Side sweatshops, and were passionately loyal members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. All were unmarried. We were their only family. Despite my mother's frenzied matchmaking, she had never succeeded in pinning a husband down for any of them. They were all too *particular*, she said—what a calamity for a woman not to be married! But my cousin and her friends accepted their fate calmly, and prided themselves on their culture and their strong progressive interests. They felt they belonged not to the "kitchen world," like my mother, but to the enlightened tradition of the old Russian intelligentsia. Whenever my mother sighed over their lot, they would



ARPEGE

MY SIN

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smile, out of their greater knowledge of the outer world, and, looking at me with pointed appeal for acknowledgment, would speak of novels they had read in Yiddish or Russian, of "Winesburg, Ohio," of some article in the *Nation*.

Our cousin and her two friends were of my parents' generation, but I could never believe it; they seemed to enjoy life with such outspokenness. They were the first grown-up people I had ever met who used the word "love" without embarrassment. "*Liebe! Liebe!*" my mother would explode whenever one of them protested that she could not, after all, marry a man she did not love. "What is this love you make such a stew about? You do not like the way he holds his cigarette? Marry him first and it will all come out right in the end!" It astonished me to realize there was a world in which even unmarried women no longer young were simply individual human beings with lives of their own. Our cousin and her two friends talked openly of the look on Garbo's face when John Gilbert took her in his arms, serenely disposed of each new *Chaim Yankel*, poor wretch, my mother picked for them, and argued my father down on small points of Socialist doctrine. As they sat around the cut-glass bowl on the table, cracking walnuts, expertly peeling the skin off an apple in long, even strips, cozily sipping at a glass of tea, they crossed their legs in comfort and gave off a deliciously musky fragrance of face powder that framed them for me in all their dark coloring, with their brilliantly white teeth, and their rosy Russian blouses that swelled and rippled in terraces of embroidery over their opulent breasts.

They had great flavor for me, those three women; they were the positive center of that togetherness that always meant so much to me on Friday evenings. It was a quality that seemed to start in the prickly thickness of the cut-glass bowl laden with nuts and fruits, in the light from the long black-shaded lamp hanging over the table as it shimmered on the fruit bowl and softened that room where the curtains had been drawn against the dark and empty streets, a quality that found its unexpectedly tender voice in the Yiddish folk songs and Socialist hymns they taught me—"Let's Forgive Each Other," "Tsuzamen, Tsuzamen!" ("All Together, Brothers!"). Those Friday evenings, I suddenly found myself enveloped in some old, primary Socialist idea that men could go beyond every barrier of race and nation and language—even of class!—into a loving union of the whole human race.

OFTEN, those Friday evenings, the grownups spoke of *der heym* (home), and then it was hard for me. "*Heym*" was a terrible word. I saw millions of Jews lying dead under the Polish eagle with knives in their throats. I was afraid with my mother's fears, thought I should weep when she wept, lived through every pogrom whose terrors she chanted. I associated with that old European life only pain, mud, and hopelessness, but I was of it still, through her. Whenever she called the roll of her many brothers and sisters and their children, recounting at each recital that this one was dead, that one dead, another starving and sure soon to die—who knew *how* they were living these days in that miserable Poland?—I felt there was some supernatural Polish eagle across the sea whose face I should never see but who sent out some dark force to hold me fast.

In many ways, *der heym* was dim and abstract, nothing to do with me at all, alien as the skullcap and beard and frock coat of my mother's father, whom I never actually saw but whose calm, orthodox dignity stared up at me from an old, cracked photograph at the bottom of a bureau drawer. Yet I lived each of my mother's fears, from Dugjitz to Hamburg to London to Hester Street to Brownsville, through and through, with such fidelity that there were times when I wished I had made that journey, too, wished I had seen czarist Russia, since I had in any event to suffer it all over again. I often felt twinges of jealousy because my parents could talk about that more intense, somehow less *experimental* life with so many private smiles between them. It was bewildering; it made me long constantly to get at some past nearer my own New York life, this having to live with all those running wounds of a world I had never seen.

Then, amidst the talk on Friday evenings, I would take up "The Boys' Life of Theodore Roosevelt" again, and moodily call out to those strangers on the summer veranda in Oyster Bay, until my father gave us his tale of his younger days in America. That was painful, too, in another way, yet it always made him curiously lighthearted and left me swimming in space. For he had gone off painting boxcars on the Union Pacific, had been as far west as Omaha, had actually seen Sidney Hillman toiling in Hart Schaffner & Marx's Chicago factory, had heard his beloved it's a

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Debs making fools of Bryan and Taft in the 1908 campaign, had been offered a homestead in Colorado! "Omaha" was the most beautiful word I had ever heard, "homestead" almost as beautiful. I could never forgive him for not having accepted that homestead.

"What would I have done there? I'm no farmer."

"You should have taken it! Why do we always live here?"

"It would have been too lonely. Nobody I knew."

"What a chance!"

"Don't be childish. Nobody I knew."

"Why? Why?"

"Alfred, what do you want of us poor Jews?"

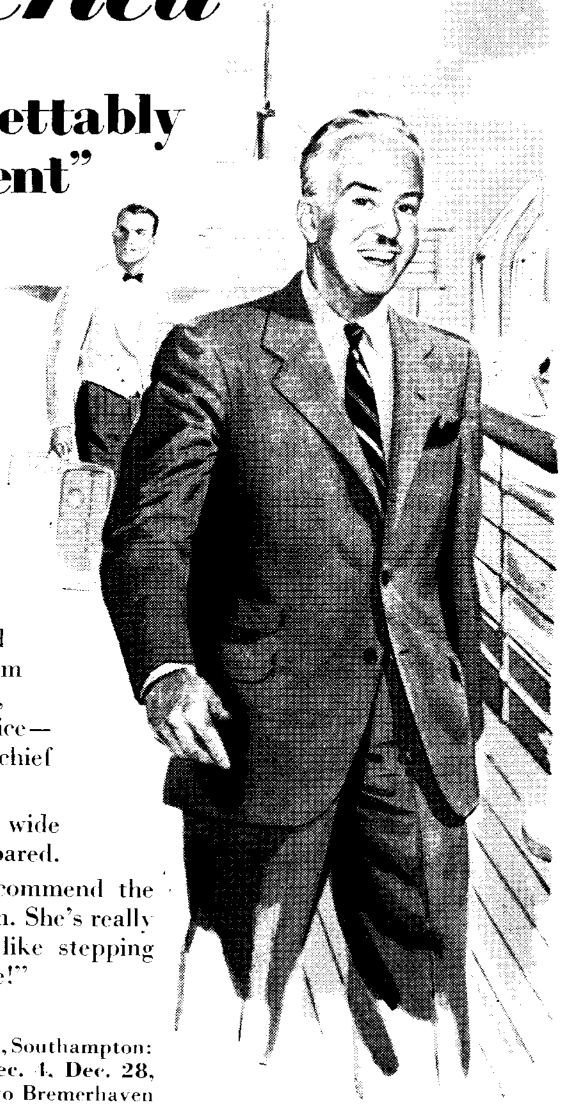
So it was. We had always to be together, believers and non-believers; we were a people; I was of that people. Unthinkable to go one's own way, to doubt, or to escape the fact that I was a Jew. I had heard of Jews who pretended they were not, but I could not understand them. We had all of us lived together so long that we would not have known how to separate even if we had wanted to. The most frightening word was "*aleyn*"—"alone." Again and again, I saw the same picture: a man desolately walking down a dark street, newspapers and cigarette butts flying in his face as he tasted in the dust and grit the full measure of his strangeness. *Aleyn! Aleyn!* My father had been alone here in America as a boy. *His* father, whose first name I bore, had died here at the age of twenty-five, of pneumonia caught on a garment workers' picket line, and his body had been flung in with the bodies of thousands of other Jews who perished in those first years on the East Side. My father had never been able to find his father's grave. *Aleyn! Aleyn!* Did immigrant Jews, then, marry only out of loneliness? Was even Socialism just a happier way of keeping us together? I trusted it to do that.

Socialism would be one long Friday evening around the samovar and the cut-glass bowl laden with nuts and fruits, all of us singing "*Tsuzamen, tsuzamen!*" Then the heroes of the Russian novel—*our* kind of people—would walk the world, and I, wearing a high-necked Russian blouse, "à la Tolstoy," would live forever with those I loved in that beautiful Russian country of the mind. Listening to our cousin and her two friends, I, who had never seen it, who associated with it nothing but the names of great writers and my father's saying as we went through the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, "Nice! But you should have seen the Czar's summer palace at Tsarskoe Selo!," suddenly saw Russia as the grand antithesis of all bourgeois ideals, the spiritual home of all *truly* free people. I was sure that there was no other literature in the world like the Russian; that the only warm hearts on earth were Russian, like our cousin's and her two friends'; that *other* people were always dully materialist but that the Russian soul, like Nijinsky's dream of pure flight, would always leap outward, past all barriers, to a lyric realm in which my ideal socialism and the fiery moodiness of Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique" would be entirely at home with each other. *Tsuzamen, tsuzamen!* How many millions would be with us! China was in our house those Friday evenings, Africa, the Indian masses. And it was those three unmarried dressmakers from the rank and file who wrapped me in that spell, with the worldly clicking of their agate beads, and the musky fragrance of their face powder, and their embroidered Russian blouses, with the great names of Russian writers ringing against the cut-glass bowl under the black lamp. Never did the bowl look so laden, never did apples and tea smell so good, never did the samovar pour out with such steaming bounty as on those Friday evenings, when I tasted in the tea and the talk the evangelical heart of our cousin and her two friends, and realized that it was we—we!—who would someday put the world on its noblest course.

"*Kinder, kinder,*" my mother would say. "Enough *diskusye*. Maybe now a little music? Alfred, play 'Scheherazade'!"

I PICKED up my violin. You could melt their hearts with it; the effect of the violin on almost everyone I knew was uncanny. I could watch them softening, easing, already on the brink of tears, yet, with their hands at rest in their laps, they stared straight ahead at the wall, breathing hard, an unforeseen smile of rapture on their mouths. Any slow movement, if only it was played lingeringly and sagely enough, seemed to come to them as a reminiscence of a reminiscence. It seemed to have something to do with our being Jews. The depths of Jewish memory the violin could throw open apparently had no limit, for every slow movement was based on something "Russian," every plaintive melody, even in Beethoven or Mozart, was "Jewish." I could skip from composer to composer, from theme to theme, without any fear, ever, of being detected, for all slow movements fell into a single chant of *der heym* and of the great "Kol Nidre," sung in the first evening hours of the Day of Atonement, in whose long, rending cry—of contrition? of grief? of hopeless love for the Creator?—I relived all the Jews' bitter intimacy with death.

Then I cranked up the old brown Victrola, and took our favorite records out of the red-velvet compartments, and we listened to John McCormack singing "Ave Maria," Amelita Galli-Curci singing "Caro nome" ("How ugly she is!" my parents would say wonderingly. "Have you seen her picture? Incredible! But how she sings!"), and Alma Gluck singing "Comin' thro' the Rye." The high point was Caruso singing from "La Juive." He inspired in my father and mother such helpless, intimidated adoration that I came to think of what was always humbly referred to as his "golden voice" as something unearthly. The pleasure he gave us was beyond all music. When Mischa Elman played some well-known melody, we sighed at each other. His tone was so *warm*: he bubbled slowly in my ears, like the sound of chicken fat crackling in the pan. But Caruso, "that *Italyener*," seemed to me the echo of some outrageously pagan voice on the roof of the world. While I pushed at the hand crank and the wheezy sounds of the orchestra in the background came to me as the whispered turnings, sighs, and alarms of the crowd around the circus pit, there on high, and rising higher and higher with each note, that voice, that "golden voice," leaped its way from one trapeze to another. We sat hunched in our wonder, our adoration, our fear. Would he make it? Could any human being find that last, impossible rung? "*Rachel, quand du Seigneur la grâce tutélaire*. . ." Then, suddenly bounding back to earth, there he was before us again, secretly smiling, the tones welling out of him with such brazen strength, such irresistible energy, that he left us gasping. I could see him standing inside the Victrola box—a centaur just out of the woods, not quite human,



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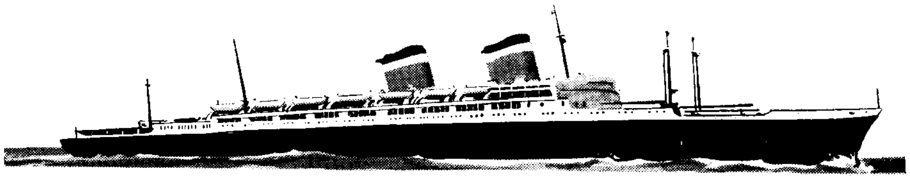

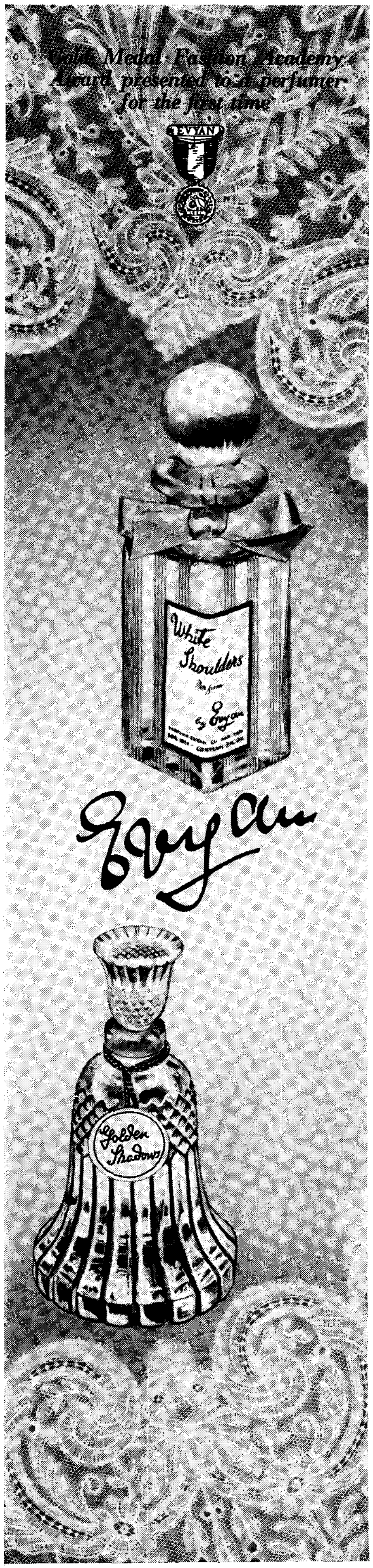
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with that enigmatic, almost contemptuous smile on his face. "What a voice!" my father would say over and over, deeply shaken. "What a voice! It's not human! Never has there been a voice like it!" Then, his face white with pleasure, with amazement, with wonder, "Oh, that *Italyener!* Oh, that *Italyener!* What power he has, that *Italyener!*"

IN Brownsville tenements, the kitchen is frequently the largest room and the center of the household. As a child, I felt that we lived in a kitchen to which four other rooms were annexed. My mother, a "home" dressmaker, had her workshop in the kitchen. She told me once that she had begun dressmaking in Poland when she was thirteen; as far back as I can remember, she was making dresses for the local women. She had an innate sense of design, a quick eye for all the subtleties in the latest fashions—even when she despised them—and great boldness. For three or four dollars, she would study the fashion magazines with a customer, go with the customer to the remnant store on Belmont Avenue to pick out the material, argue the owner down—all remnant stores, for some reason, were supposed to be shady, as if the owners dealt in stolen goods—and then for days patiently fit and baste and sew and fit again. Our flat was always full of women in their house dresses, sitting around the kitchen table waiting for a fitting. My little bedroom, next to the kitchen, was the fitting room. The sewing machine, an old, nut-brown Singer with golden scrolls painted along the black arm and engraved along the two tiers of little drawers, massed with needles and thread, on each side of the treadle, stood next to the window and the great coal-black stove that was our main source of heat. In December, two outside bedrooms were closed off, and were used to chill bottles of milk and cream, cold borsch, and jellied calves' feet.

The kitchen held our lives together. My mother worked in it all day long; we ate in it almost all meals except the Passover Seder; I did my homework at the kitchen table, and in winter I often had a bed made up for me on three kitchen chairs near the stove. On the wall, just over the table, hung a long, horizontal mirror that sloped to a ship's prow at each end and was framed with cherry wood. It took up the whole wall, and drew every object in the kitchen to itself. The walls were a fiercely stippled whitewash, so often rewhitened by my father in slack seasons that the paint looked as if it had been squeezed into the walls. A large electric bulb hung from the center of the ceiling at the end of a chain; the old gas mantle and key still jutted out of the wall like antlers. In the corner next to the toilet was the sink at which we washed, and the square tub in which my mother did our clothes. Above them, tacked to the shelf on which were pleasantly lined up square, blue-bordered white sugar and spice jars, hung calendars from the Public National Bank, on Pitkin Avenue, and the Minsker Progressive Branch of the Workmen's Circle; receipts for the payment of insurance premiums, and household bills, on a spindle; and two little boxes engraved with Hebrew letters. One of these was for the poor, the other to buy back the Land of Israel. Each spring, a small, bearded man would appear in our kitchen, salute us with a hurried Hebrew blessing, empty the boxes (sometimes with a sidelong look of disdain if they were not full), hurriedly bless us again for remembering our less fortunate Jewish brothers and sisters, and, after trying to persuade my mother to put up still another box, take his departure until the next spring. We did occasionally think to drop coins in the boxes, but this was usually only on the dreaded mornings of mid-term and final examinations, because my mother thought it would bring me luck. She was extremely superstitious, but embarrassed about it, and always laughed at herself whenever, on the morning of an examination, she counselled me to leave the house on my right foot. "I know it's silly," her smile seemed to say, "but what harm can it do? It may calm God down."

The kitchen gave a special character to our lives—my mother's character. My memories of that kitchen are dominated by the nearness of my mother sitting all day long at her sewing machine, by the clacking of the treadle against the linoleum floor, by the patient twist of her right shoulder as she pushed at the wheel with one hand or lifted the foot to free the needle when it had got stuck in a thick piece of material. The kitchen was her life. Year by year, as I began to take in her fantastic capacity for labor and her anxious zeal, I realized it was ourselves she kept stitched together. I cannot remember a time when she was not working. She worked because the law of her life was work; she worked because she would have found life meaningless without work. She read almost no English; she could read the Yiddish paper but never felt she had time to. We were always talking of a day when I would teach her how to read English, but somehow there was never time. When I awoke in the morning, she was already at her machine, or in the great crowd of housewives at the grocery, getting fresh rolls for breakfast. When I returned from school, she was at her machine, or conferring over *McCall's* with some neighborhood woman who had come in pointing hopefully to an illustration. ("Mrs. Kazin! Mrs. Kazin! Make me a dress like it shows here in the picture!") By the time my father came home from work, she had somehow or other interrupted herself to make supper for us. After the dishes were cleared and washed, she was back at her machine. When I went to bed, often she was still there, wearing her pince-nez, pounding away at the treadle, hunched over the wheel, her hands steering a piece of gauze under the needle with a finesse that contrasted sharply with her swollen hands and broken nails. Her left hand had been pierced when, as a girl, she worked in the infamous Triangle shirtwaist factory, on the East Side. A needle had gone straight through the palm, severing a large vein. They had sewn it up for her so clumsily that a tuft of flesh lay folded over the palm.

The kitchen was the great machine that set our lives running; it slowed down a little only on Saturdays and holy days. From my mother's kitchen, I gained my first picture of life, as a white, overheated, starkly lit workshop redolent with Jewish cooking, crowded with women in house dresses, strewn with fashion magazines, patterns, dress material, spools of thread—at whose center, so lashed to her machine that bolts of energy seemed to dance out of her hands and feet as she worked, my mother stamped the treadle hard against the floor, hard, hard, silently, grimly at war, beating out the first rhythm of the world for me.

EVERY sound from the street roared and trembled at our windows—the screech of the trolley cars on Rockaway Avenue, the eternal smash of a handball against the wall of our house, the clatter of *der Italyener's* cart packed with watermelons, the singsong of the old-clothes men walking Chester Street. All day long, people streamed into our flat as a matter of course—"customers," upstairs neighbors, downstairs neighbors, women who would stop in for a half hour's talk, salesmen, relatives, insurance agents. Usually they came in without ringing the bell; everyone knew my mother was always at home. I would

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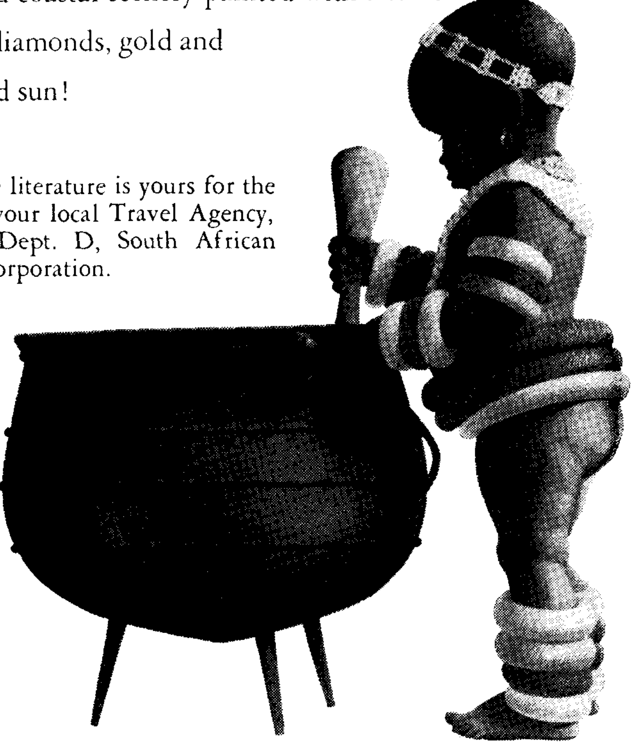

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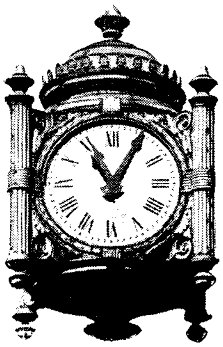

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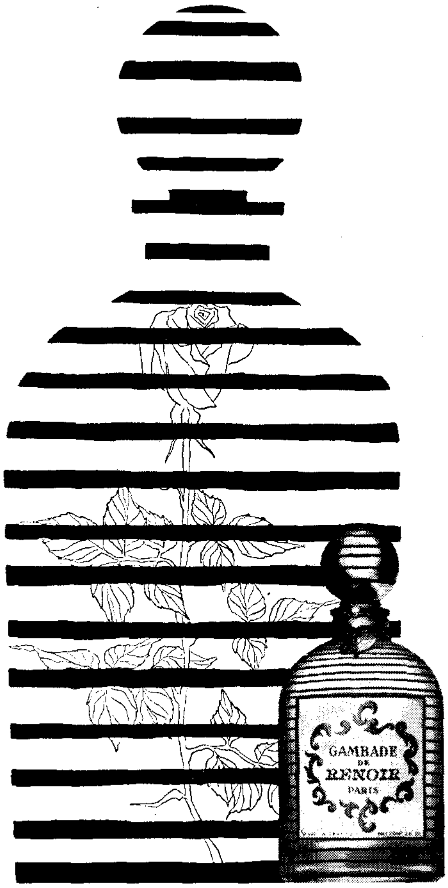

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hear the front door opening and the wind whistling through our front hall, and then some familiar face would appear in our kitchen, with the familiar bland, matter-of-fact, inquiring look. No need to stand on ceremony; my mother and her kitchen were available to everyone all day long.

At night, the kitchen contracted around the blaze of light on the cloth, the patterns, the ironing board, on which the iron had burned a black border around the tear in the muslin cover. The finished dresses looked so frilly as they jostled on their wire hangers after all the work my mother had put into them. And then I would get that strangely ominous smell of tension from the dress fabrics and patterns and the burn in the cover of the ironing board—as if each piece of cloth and paper under the naked bulb might suddenly go up in flames. Whenever I pass some small tailoring shop lit up at night and see the owner hunched over his steam press, whenever, in some poorer neighborhood of the city, I see through a window a small, crowded kitchen naked under the harsh light glittering in the ceiling, I still smell that fiery breath, that warning of imminent fire. What I must have felt most about ourselves, I see now, was that we ourselves were like kindling—that all the hard-driven pieces of ourselves and all the hard-used objects in that kitchen were like so many slivers of wood that might go up in flames if we came too near the white-blazing filaments in that naked bulb. Our tension itself was fire, we ourselves were forever burning—to live, to push down the dread in our souls, to make good.

Twice a year, on the anniversaries of her parents' deaths, my mother placed on top of the icebox a kitchen glass packed with wax—the *yortseit*, or mourning glass—and lit the wick in it. Sitting at the kitchen table over my homework, I would look across the threshold to that mourning glass and sense that for my mother the distance from our kitchen to *der heym*, from life to death, was only a flame's length. Poor as we were, it was not poverty that drove my mother so hard. It was loneliness—a long, bitter brooding over all those left behind, dead or dying or soon to die; a loneliness, locked up in her kitchen, that dwelt every day on the hazardousness of life and the nearness of death but still kept struggling, trying to get us through by endless labor. With us, life started up again only on the last shore. Whenever my mother spoke of her hopes for us, it was with such unbelievingness that the

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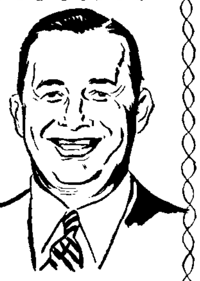

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likes of us would ever come to anything, such abashed hope and readiness for pain, that I finally came to see in the flame burning on top of the icebox death itself. In the light of that mourning candle, there were ranged around me how many dead and dying—how many eras of pain, of exile, of dispersion, of cringing before the powers of this world!

It was always at dusk that my mother's loneliness came home most to me. Alert to the slightest fading of the light at her window, she would suddenly confess her fatigue by removing her pince-nez, and then, wearily pushing aside the great mound of fabric on her machine, would stare at the street as if to warm herself in the last of the sun. "How sad it is!" I once heard her say. "It grips me! It grips me!" Twilight was the bottommost part of the day, the chillest and loneliest time for her. Always so near to her moods, I knew she was fighting some deep inner dread, struggling against the returning tide of darkness along the street that invariably assailed her heart with the same foreboding. Where? Where now? Where is the day taking us now? Yet one good look at the street would revive her: a moment, only a moment, watching the evening crowd of women gathering at the grocery for fresh bread and milk. I see her now, leaning against the window sill, with her face against the glass, her eyes almost asleep in enjoyment, just before she starts up with a guilty cry—"What foolishness is this in me!"—and goes to the stove to prepare supper for us.

—ALFRED KAZIN

•

Mrs. Cox was in direct line of the maddened brute's advance. She wrote a descriptive poem of the incident which frightened many people but hurt none.—*Salt Lake Tribune.*

Not at the top of her form, perhaps.

•

Eugene Weissmann of Callicoon Center was the High County Champion for the first quarter of the Home Egg Laying Test in Sullivan County. Eugene received a blue ribbon for this.—*Monticello* (*N.Y.*) *Republican Watchman.*

Little enough, too.

•

MOST FASCINATING NEWS STORY OF THE WEEK

[*The following item, reprinted in its entirety, is from the Florence* (*S.C.*) *News*]

CHARLESTON (AP). "Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou, Romeo?" might have been the slogan here yesterday for selective service local board 10.

Hennessy to the Rescue!

This is "Hennessy" – our gallant St. Bernard. And though we've never met a St. Bernard with a keg of Hennessy around his neck, we're willing to bet that it's a superb combination — man's best friend bearing one of the heartiest, most hospitable spirits known to man.

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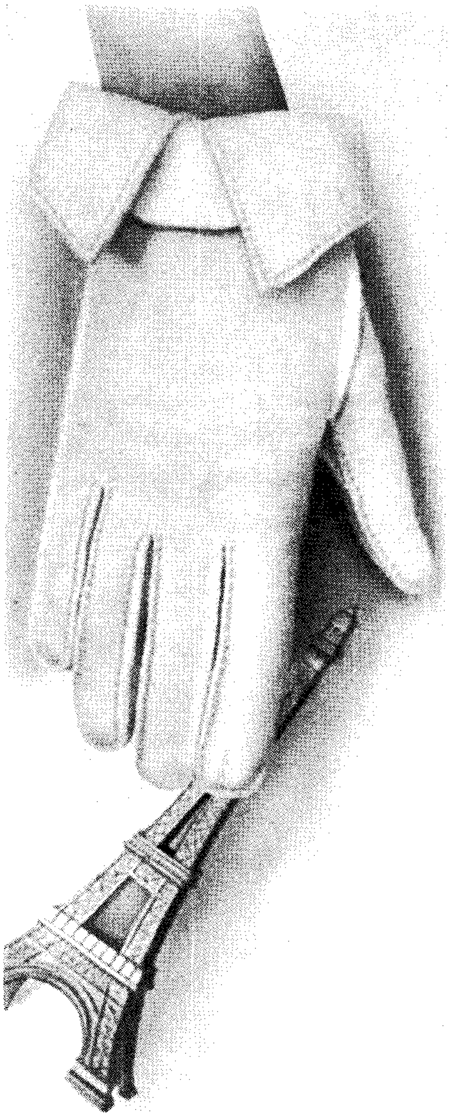

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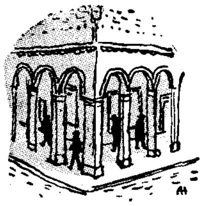
LETTER FROM PARIS

SEPTEMBER 5



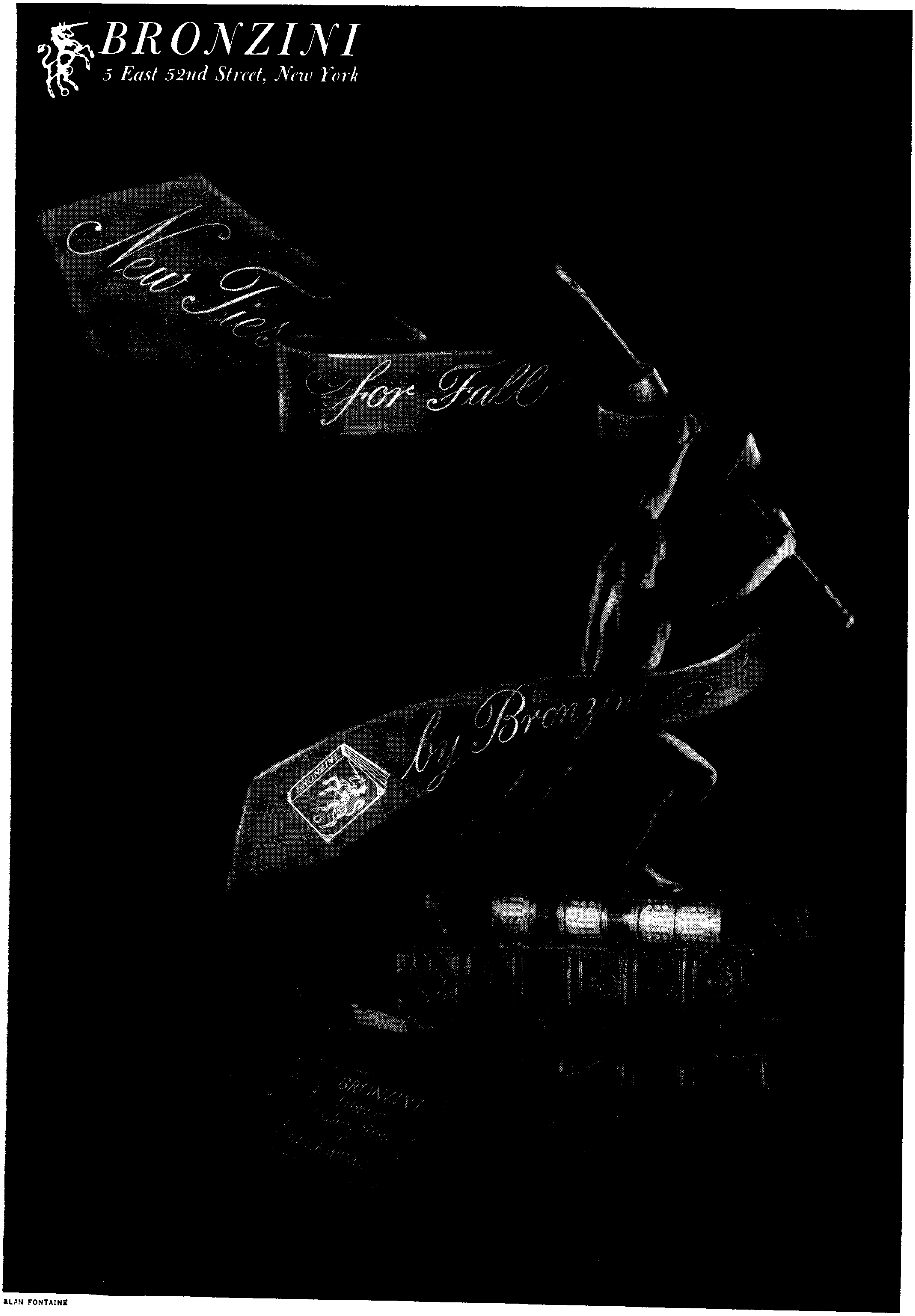
WHAT the French call the Strategy of the Atlantic is being determined in the series of four international conferences that has started off beside the Pacific, in San Francisco, and in the next two months will go inland, to Ottawa and Washington, and end up, a few miles from the Mediterranean, in Rome. The itinerary shows how the Atlantic concept has grown in space and in responsibility. The two months of talk are intended to lay down the Atlantic group's diplomatic, economic, and military strategy, by which Western Europe will live—it hopes it will live—for the next sixteen months, or until the end of 1952. It is certainly no secret here that 1952 is regarded as Western Europe's crucial year—*encore une fois*. It is supposed to be the last year in which the conquest of Western Europe would be easy.

Obviously, diplomacy and economics are today mere subdivisions of the military problem. According to Quai d'Orsay rumor, the French expect, and, for reasons of diplomacy, expect to accept, three American conference-table propositions, all of which are military in inspiration and none of which the French like. They will swallow, first, the German *état-major* in Europe's proposed Allied army; second, the inclusion of Greece and Turkey in the Atlantic Pact, which will extend Atlantic influence out to the Golden Horn; and, third, the recent American dicker with Franco Spain. This last is as repugnant to the French as the first, and seems made of the same old dangerous pro-Fascist stuff, which they wager will turn up again in the German officer group. In exchange, the French will ask frankly just money for arms. They want American credits for their Atlantic Pact rearmament, for airdromes, and for more help in their Indo-Chinese war, now absorbing a third of France's defense fund. It is the military merry-go-round all over again, with tanks and planes instead of horses. Rearmament is not all that has taken place in France in the six years since the war ended, but here, as elsewhere, it has now become the extra, almost unbearable load.

In the light of the vital importance of the 1952 plans, it seemed inappropriate that the French Parliament, still wrangling in its three-month-old deadlock on whether French children shall receive a Catholic-school education for free, felt itself able to listen for only a few minutes to the parting remarks of France's *ambassadeur extraordinaire*, Minister of Foreign Affairs Robert Schuman, before he took off for San Francisco. On the stooped shoulders of this homely-faced, gentle-voiced bachelor, who increasingly appears to be the official fiancé of Marianne, the only girl he loves, rests the main burden of representing at the conferences not only his own country's viewpoint but to a large extent the viewpoint of Europe. It may be worth noting that his official relationship with the Chamber and the Upper House is exactly the same as Mr. Dean Acheson's with our House and Senate (except that Schuman's is a thousand times better). That is to say, as the voice of the government, briefed by the Conseil des Ministres, Schuman will talk at the conference tables as he sees fit. Being governors of France, in their way, the members of the Assembly can, when he returns, disagree with what he said, promised, or accepted, and can vote against it—and can throw it and him out, and probably themselves at the same time. For such an upheaval as a post-factum rejection of his ministrations might lead to the fall of the government, and thus to the threatened ascendance of General de Gaulle's plurality R.P.F. Party, and even, if the General's schedule is followed, to new elections.

SINCE Schuman's departure, the Deputies have actually got down to discussing the perilously high cost of French living. They have already put a ceiling price on beef. Control of *hippo bifteck*, or horse-meat steak, is likely to come next. A great favorite with the working class (it tastes sweeter than beef and is popularly credited with passing on to the eater the horse's strength), it is now as high-priced as stewing beef for *bœuf bourguignon*. Corner grocers have stopped stocking tinned sardines, which nobody can afford, and the better cheeses, such as Tomme de Savoie, which is covered with a crust of grape seed for protection and is now in its luscious ripe season. Bread is going up to fifty francs a kilo, a shock for the French, who eat about a metre of it a day.

Another bread shock has been even worse—the mysterious madness, agonies, and deaths from poisoned bread in the village of Pont-St.-Esprit, near Avignon, composing a medieval nightmare tale. It seems that the lethal bread came from Briand's Bakery, the best in town,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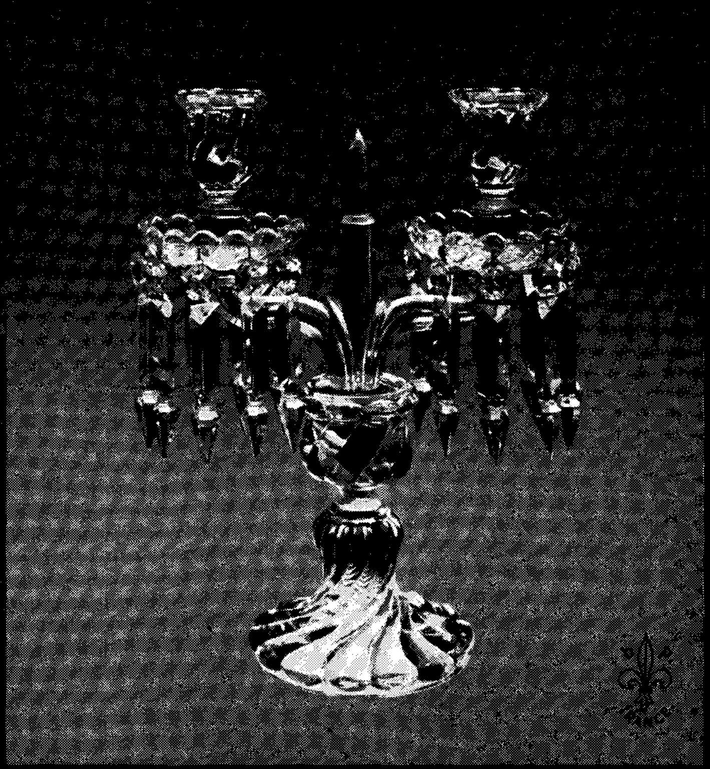

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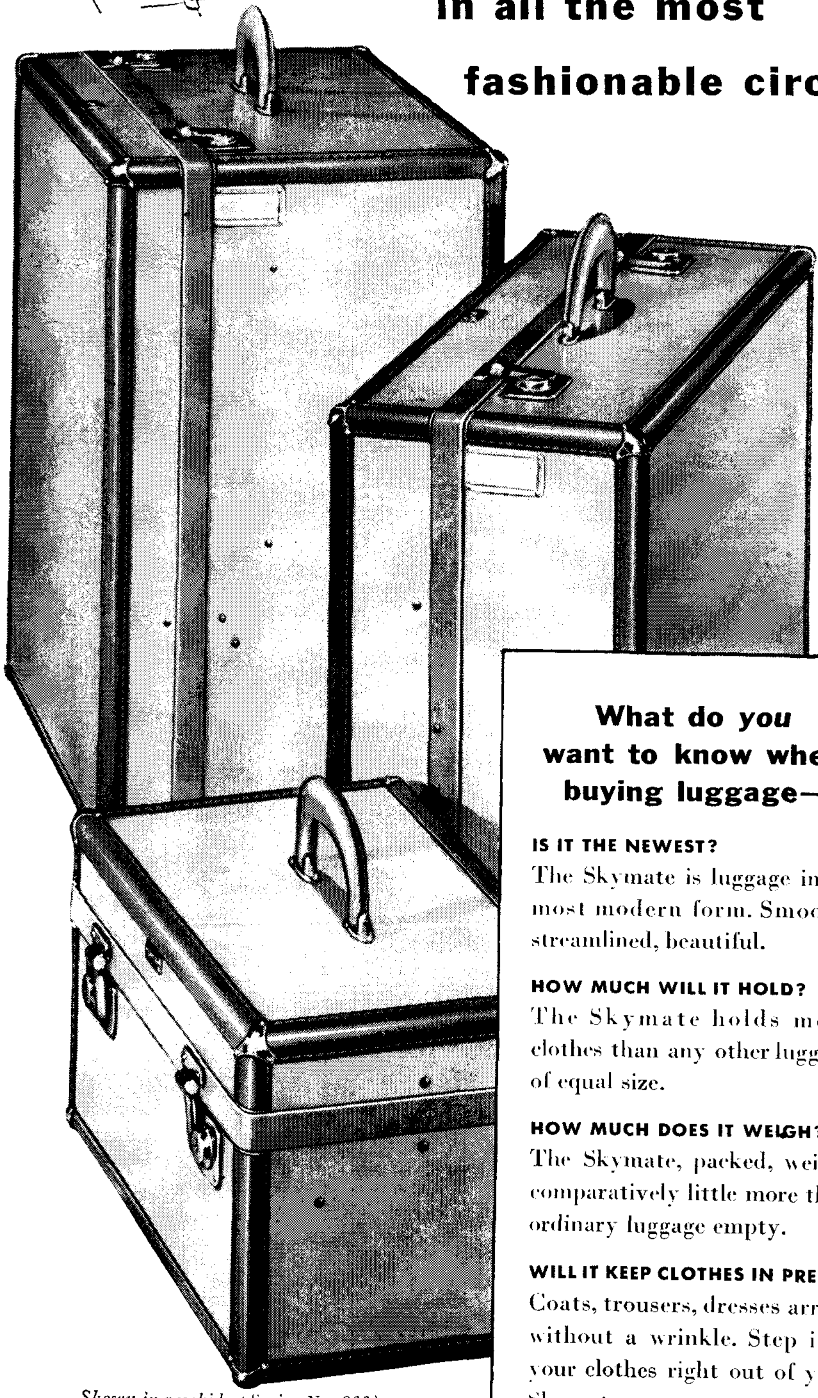
on August 17th. The mystery was not solved until August 31st. By that time, four Spiripontains, as the villagers are called, had died in anguish, thirty-one had gone raving mad, five were in grave danger, and two hundred were sick. Even cats, dogs, and ducks that ate crumbs of the bread had fits. People seized with the affliction acted possessed; they saw monstrous visions, and burned with inner fires. Charles Graugeon, aged eleven, tried to strangle his mother. Mme. Paul Rieu needlessly attempted suicide, for she died anyway. Mme. Marthe Toulouse tried to leap into the Rhone to quench the fiery serpents inside her. One citizen fired his shotgun at the monster he thought pursued him. A peasant named Mizon, who missed buying his favorite evening *petits pains* at Briand's on August 17th, came by for them the next morning, went mad, and died on August 20th. In the insane asylums of neighboring Nîmes, Avignon, Montpellier, and Marseille, where the frenzied Spiripontains were sent, they frightened even the other lunatics. Only one photograph of a victim appeared in the press. It was of a M. Guignon, being carried to an ambulance, his legs and arms raised to fight off whatever he thought he saw, his elderly face, with open, distorted mouth, looking like a Gothic carving of an old man screaming in Hell.

The slow solving of the mystery, followed with palpitating interest by the French, was like a detective story. It started with a rumor of a mass political poisoning, developed into a fascinating study of the functioning of provincial authorities, and ended in a sort of Balzac formula. Professor Jean Olivier, chief toxicologist of Marseille, suspected poisoning from the chickling vetch, *Lathyrus sativus*, which produces lathyrism, or spastic paralysis. Then he discovered the presence in the bread of rye ergot, *Claviceps purpurea*, that little black abortion on grain heads that comes in wet weather and, it has been claimed, contains, among dozens of other chemical elements, about twenty alkaloid poisons, three of them virulent. The Montpellier 14th Brigade Mobile of the country police did a brilliant, slow job of deduction. Little grain is raised or ground in the Spiripontains' Département du Gard. There were twenty-three suspects, the mills in two nearby wheat-raising *départements*. Finally, one miller, Maurice Maillet, of the mill at St.-Martin-la-Rivière, in the Département de la Vienne, confessed that he had ground into his wheat granary scrapings of ergot-bearing rye, furnished to him by a dishonest local baker (it seems the baker's cashbooks were not even in order, which also shocked the French), who had bought the diseased grain illegally from unscrupulous peasants. Maillet, who now says his conscience pained him, sent the sack of bad flour to Pont-St.-Esprit "because I did not know anybody personally there." The Balzacian dénouement was, of course, cupidity. The two men were avoiding twenty francs sales tax per kilo on the grain, were dealing in spoiled goods for profit, and were using more rye in wheat flour than the law allows. Maillet has been arrested for homicide and "involuntary wounding" of others.

This was the greatest mass poisoning from ergot that France has known since the year 944, when, in Aquitaine and the Limousin, according to the chroniclers, forty thousand died, all of them crazed. (The most recent ergot poisoning outside France was in 1879, in the Novgorod district of Russia.) The affliction was epidemic in France after rainy summers during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when it was regarded as an act of God. It was piously called Saint Anthony's Fire, because St. Anthony once supposedly cured the disease by his intercession.

THE latest public text of the French philosopher-playwright-novelist-editor Jean-Paul Sartre is a poster pasted up in a combined bookshop-and-bar on the Rue St. Benoît, behind the Café des Deux Magots and the Café de Flore, on the Left Bank. The poster is a disclaimer that reads, in part, "Be advised that Existentialism, the philosophy, has nothing whatever to do with the Existentialism at large in St.-Germain-des-Prés. When Juliette Greco [the black-banged singer] opened the Café Tabou [in the Rue Dauphine, after the Liberation], she was asked who she was. The answer was 'An Existentialist.' The press seized on the word. That band of checked-shirted youngsters who *haunt* St.-Germain-des-Prés came to be known as Existentialists. They bear no relation to me nor do I to them. Signed, Jean-Paul Sartre."

It is probably a good thing that the philosopher spoke out, even if he did it much too late. In the past, the hedonist Paris night life always followed painters, who were supposed to be gay dogs—into the Montmartre of the Impressionists and into the Montparnasse of the Surrealists. Sartre, who lives on the Place St.-Germain-des-Prés, is the first writer to have sowed around himself a score of night clubs; the Place used to be purely



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a littérateurs' tranquil neighborhood but is now ruined for anything more reflective than jitterbugging. He is also the first modern philosopher to have seen his philosophy become synonymous with jive. There is probably no patent on his Kierkegaardian conclusions that can protect him from the Tabou's continuing advertisement of its *soirées existentialistes*, with their excellent jazz.

As for the checked-shirted youngsters, they are a phenomenon that the Paris police keep a sharp eye on and that, this summer, tourists of all nationalities went to stare at—a phenomenon that is the basis for a certain kind of anti-Americanism many French are feeling. The checked shirt—along with blue jeans—was introduced three years ago by American college girls and boys. This year, the getup has become the neighborhood uniform for both sexes and for all nationalities of youth, including the French themselves, which is what has upset French parents, and maybe also M. Sartre. The trousers are worn, de rigueur, rolled calf-high, without socks, with sandals, and usually, this correspondent regrets to add, with dirty feet. Few of the blue-jeans set seem to be painters, writers, artists, or students—or, indeed, anything except juvenile society carrying on a monotonous, untidy masquerade, in what was one of the pleasantest of the old *faubourgs* of Paris. It would certainly be libellous to print what the adult local French population says about them. It is safer to report on the jubilation of the café owners, barkeepers, and night-club proprietors, who have made their fortune in the decent old quarter on what perhaps must be called progress.

THE peasants say that this has been the wettest August in ninety years. The fact that the government meteorological department has just announced that there were a few bucketfuls more rain in August of 1931 has merely inspired the peasants to point out that this year contains thirteen new moons to the dozen months, so of course the weather has been unlucky. The meteorological department will probably think up an answer to that one in October, when two new moons, one on the first and one on the thirtieth, will be circling in their orbits. —GENÊT

•

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—*Headline in the Matawan (N.J.) Journal.*

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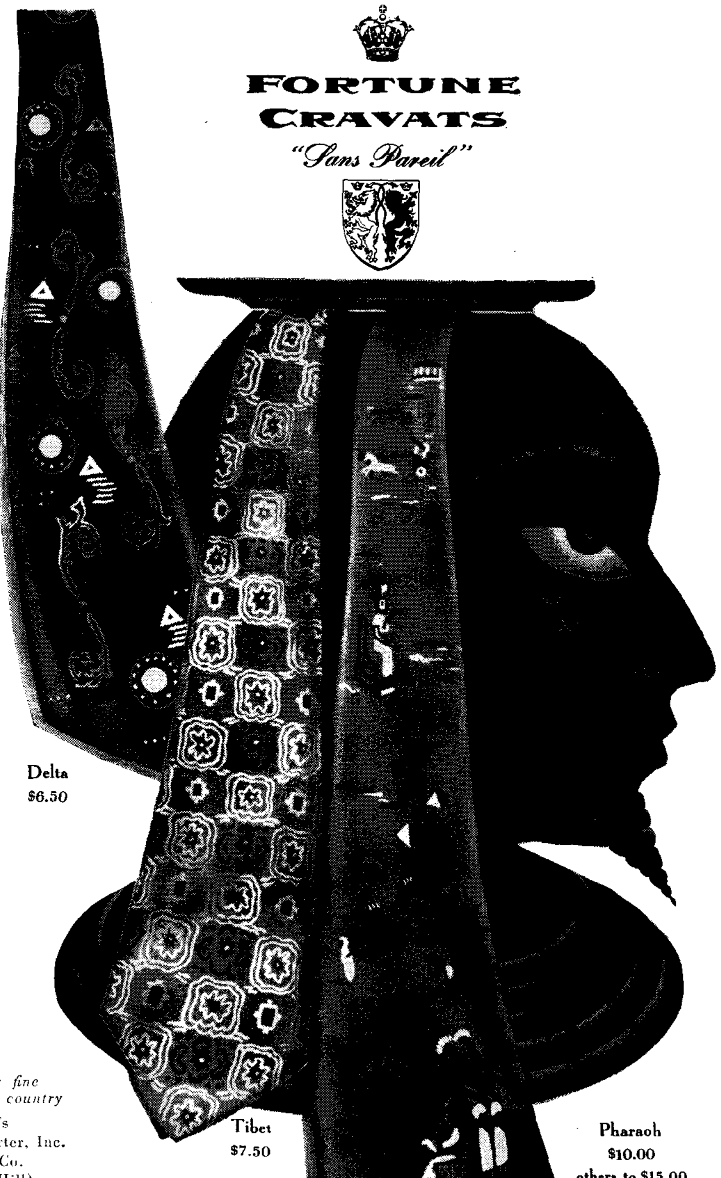

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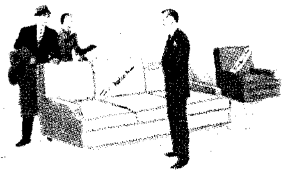

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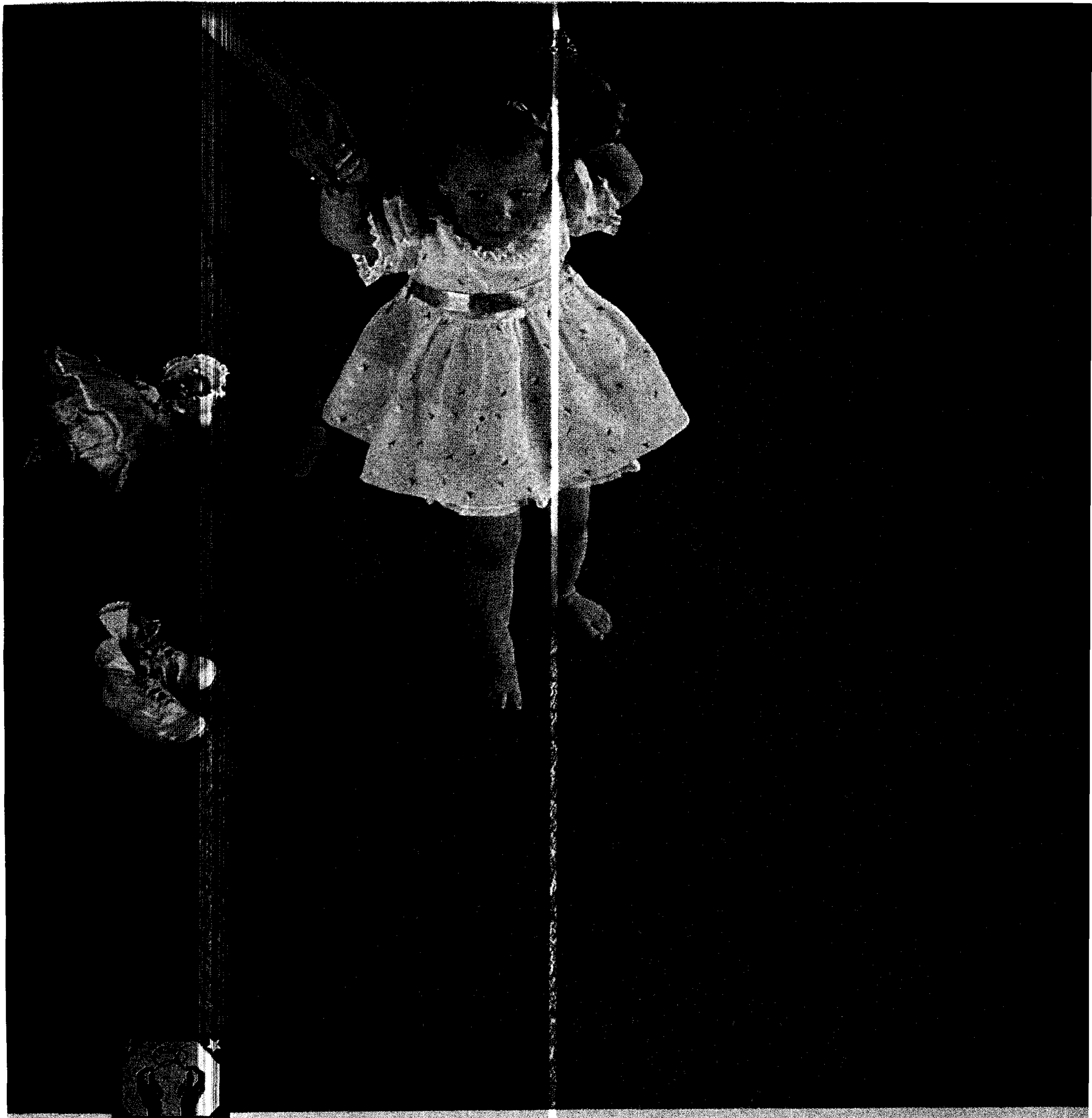

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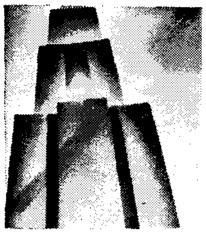
Bigelow
Rugs and Carpets

THE SKY LINE

Magic with Mirrors—I



THE dominant building in the United Nations group has been visible in its glassy glory for many months. Though the Secretariat Building is not yet finished or fully equipped, it is occupied and in operation. If any of the staff should break a leg or feel the pangs of childbirth, the well-organized hospital on the third floor could probably set the leg or deliver the baby without the patient's having to leave the premises. Now that there's a cafeteria, a bank, and a post office on the premises, too, the building provides for most of the daily non-official needs of its occupants. As a work of art, though, the Secretariat Building is a teaser. From people's opinions of its architectural significance, one can make a fair estimate of their aesthetic sophistication, their human insight, their social values, even their moral standards. A Southern editor, defending an archaic and unfunctional hospital his community is erecting, observed that it was not, thank heaven, as ugly as the United Nations Secretariat. Yet architects as able as Richard Neutra and William Wurster have pronounced the building a great achievement. Since there is no point in hiding one's opinion out of respect for recognizable and presumably living people, I will say that the Secretariat Building seems to me a superficial aesthetic triumph and an architectural failure. A few more triumphs of this nature, and this particular school of modern design might be on the rocks.

In this building, the movement that took shape in the mind of Le Corbusier in the early nineteen-twenties—and that sought to identify the vast and varied contents of modern architecture with its own arid mannerism—has reached a climax of formal purity and functional inadequacy. Whereas modern architecture began with the true precept that form follows function, and that an organic form must respect every human function, this new office building is based on the theory that even if no symbolic purpose is served, function should be sacrificed to form. This is a new kind of academicism, successful largely because its clichés readily lend themselves to imitation and reproduction. In the present instance, it has brought into existence not a work of three-dimensional architecture but a Christmas package wrapped in cellophane. Functionally, this building is an old-fashioned engine covered by a streamlined hood much embellished with chromium. The package has been conceived with what would appear to be not even an industrial stylist's interest in the contents.

From a distance, the Secretariat Building, two hundred and eighty-seven feet long, seventy-two feet wide, and thirty-nine stories high, is a great oblong prism of glass, marble, and aluminum. It connects, on its lower levels, with the General Assembly Building, to the north of it, and with the Conference Building, to the east and almost invisible except from the river. But by reason of its bulk and height, this huge slab is visually detached from them and reduces them to insignificance. The smallest buildings in Rockefeller Center are far enough away from the enormous R.C.A. Building and are sufficiently supported by buildings of intermediate height not to seem runty, but there are no such spatial gradations between the midgets and the giant in the United Nations composition; the success of this whole group depends almost solely upon this central building. The exterior of the Secretariat is much less complicated than that of the R.C.A. Building, for there are no recessions or setbacks. At the north and south ends, this prism is a smooth, windowless sheath of mottled white marble; on the east and west faces, it is a smooth wall of green glass framed in aluminum. Even the spandrels and frames of the windows do not break the surface; in fact, the only interruptions in it are four horizontal grilles, each one a story high and running the full width of the façade. These grilles, set at intervals, conceal the several installations of elevator and ventilating machinery. The lattice effect they create is repeated above the roof, to a height of over twenty feet, to conceal the penthouse, which also contains machinery. This manner of visually dividing the building was the object of adverse criticism in a recent architectural symposium. But on the whole the change of form seems to me a happy way of externally acknowledging a change of interior function, and even the latticework at the top, though costly, is a justifiable liberty in a rigidly restricted design.

IN one sense, the Secretariat is the fulfillment of a long-cherished dream. Ever since Sir Joseph Paxton

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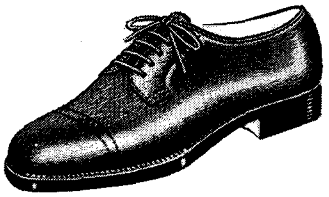

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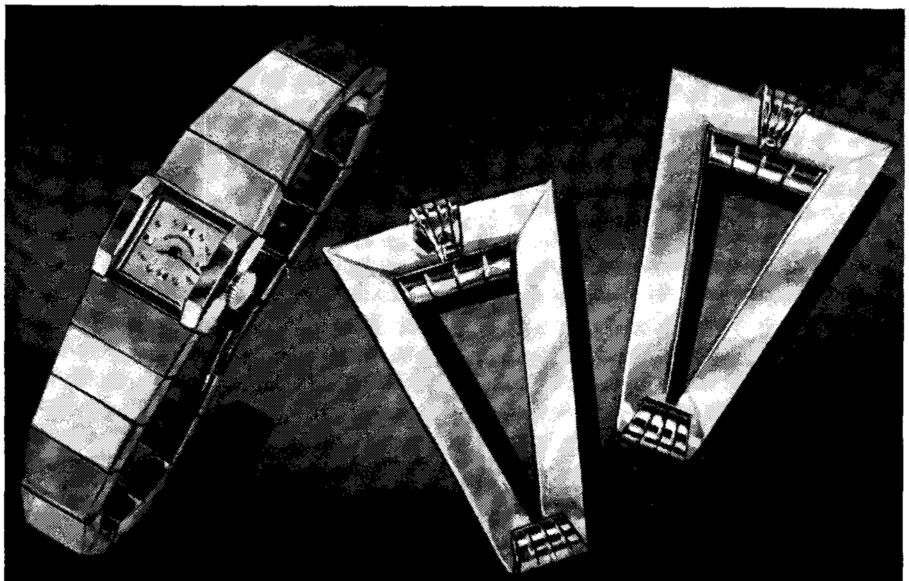
built the Crystal Palace in London, precisely a hundred years ago, the idea of continuing that development in steel and glass has haunted people's minds. When, in 1898, Sir Ebenezer Howard outlined his garden city, he thought that its whole shopping district might be an extended Crystal Palace, forgetting the tropical temperatures that even an English summer generates in a glass hothouse. In 1921, Mies van der Rohe developed plans for a skyscraper conceived in all innocence in steel and glass, with glass walls from floor to ceiling, without (as far as could be seen) pipes or utility ducts or any protection against damage by fire to the steel beams and columns, without any spandrels to conceal these utilitarian elements or any device to lessen the complete feeling of insecurity as one approached the outer walls.

Unfortunately, glass and steel are not wholly satisfactory building materials. If steel is not insulated from heat, it expands and contracts in a fashion that presents serious problems, particularly in a tall building placed where other buildings or trees do not modify the climate. Glass transmits not only light but heat, and unless windows are completely sealed, they admit air in a high wind. And, as last November's hurricane once more demonstrated, particularly in the case of the Secretariat Building, large sheets of glass are perilously breakable. Therefore, the development of the skyscraper became possible only when architects learned to give as much attention to heat-and-fire-resistant materials as to the revealing qualities of glass and the structural possibilities of steel. Glass and metal do not burn, but they crack and buckle in the heat of a fire; the Crystal Palace was demolished by flames in the nineteen-thirties. But the massive masonry of the ancient stone-and-glass cathedrals of Europe stood up under both fire and bomb blast during World War II while the buildings around them were reduced to cinders and rubble. Glass not only admits a great deal of heat on sunny days, even when the windows are closed; it likewise radiates heat to the outer air on cold days. In his own design for the Secretariat, Le Corbusier proposed to overcome these defects with two special devices. One was the permanent sun screen, or *brise-soleil*, which was used on the sunny sides of the Ministry of Education and Health Building in Rio de Janeiro in 1937—a building on which Le Corbusier served as consultant. The other was a double glass wall, inside which he intended to circu-



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late cool air in the summer and hot air in the winter. When these elements in his design were thrown out, he wrote an indignant letter to Ambassador Warren Austin, the head of the United Nations building committee, declaring that the steel-and-glass building that has now been erected would be uninhabitable. There was good reason to avoid the *brise-soleil* in New York's climate, since menacing icicles might form on it, and there is also reason to avoid a double glass wall anywhere, since the cost of cleaning what would amount to a continuous double window would be enormous. But there was an even better reason for turning down this wall. Glass should give one a clear view of the outside world, and in the form of the window—that admirable invention—it provides direct contact with fresh air and sunlight. A solid glass wall sacrifices one of these advantages, and a double glass wall sacrifices both.

But even without Le Corbusier's devices the Secretariat Building is quite different from the all-glass structure, unashamedly revealing its interior, that Paxton's Crystal Palace was and van der Rohe's skyscraper hoped to be. Because the glass is green (the color is supposed to lessen the transmission of heat), the east and the west sides of the structure, viewed from the street, look dark and opaque, not light and transparent. So, aesthetically speaking, the main function of these great glass walls is to serve as a mirror in which the buildings of the city are reflected, in which the western sky sometimes plays in delicate counterpoint to the eastern sky. No building in the city is more responsive to the constant play of light and shadow in the world beyond it; none varies more subtly with the time of day and the way the light strikes, now emphasizing the vertical metal window bars, now emphasizing the dark green of the spandrels and underlining the horizontality of the composition. No one had ever conceived of building a mirror on this scale before, and perhaps no one guessed what an endless series of pictures that mirror would reveal. The aesthetic effect is incomparable, but, unfortunately, when the building is most effective as a looking glass it is least notable as a work of architecture.

The architects, probably not realizing that their building would become a mirror, clung tenaciously to the two-dimensional quality of the exterior. Except for the grilles, there is no hint of a third dimension in those sheer, unvarying walls. Yet when the day is dark or when night falls, the building gets the

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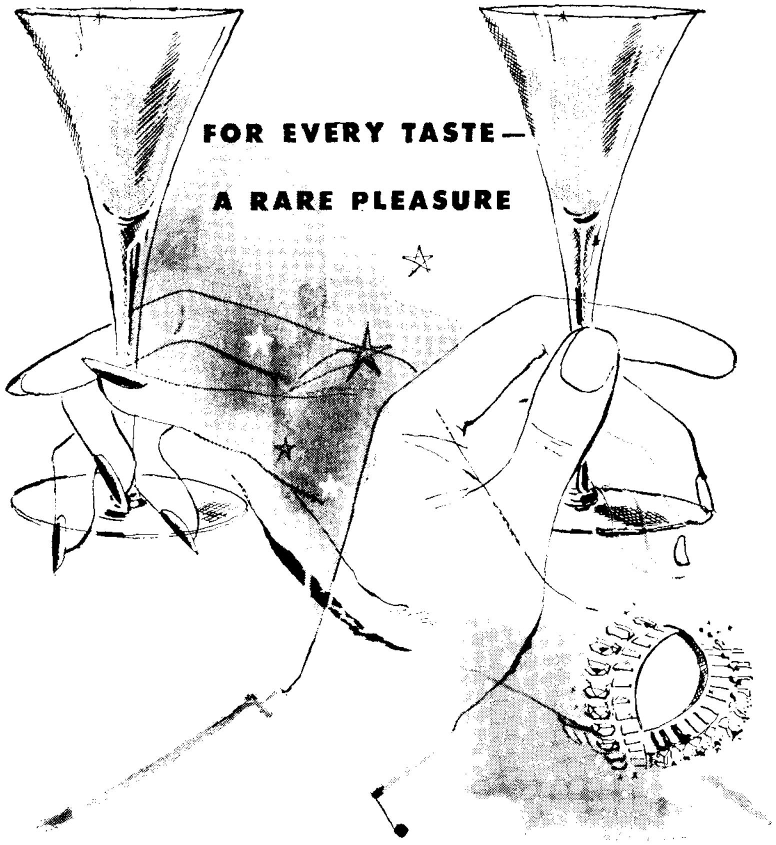

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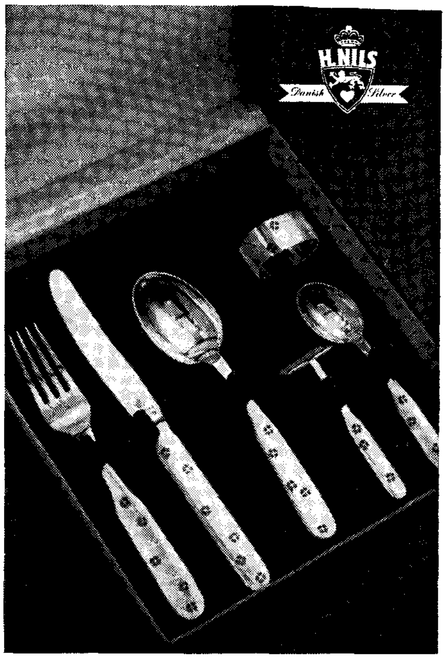
better of the designers' intentions, for the stabs of light on the ceilings of the offices add an unexpected liveliness to the west façade, making it almost the equivalent of a starry sky. That same liveliness might have been at least suggested by day if the architects had used white Venetian blinds to introduce a minor variation in the pattern of the façade. Instead, they chose gray blinds, which are considerably less efficient at repelling heat, and when the blinds are lowered, the wall of glass retains its impenetrable two-dimensional quality.

Here, then, is the Secretariat Building from the outside: two thin white vertical marble slabs, connected by two vast glass mirrors that are broken only by horizontal white aluminum grilles; a building chaste, startling, fairylike in its cold austerity, a Snow Queen's palace, exhaling by night a green moonlight splendor. Paraded as pure engineering and applied geometry, this new skyscraper proves really to be a triumph of irrelevant romanticism. If anything deserves to be called picture-book architecture, this is it, for all the fundamental qualities of architecture seem to have been sacrificed to the external picture, or, rather, to the more ephemeral passing image reflected on its surface. Should one look behind this magician's mirror, one should not be surprised to find, if not a complete void, something less than good working quarters for a great world organization.

In planning the Secretariat, the architects were not, like most designers, confined to the constricted space of the conventional Manhattan lot, or even block, and they could thus have designed a freestanding building, or a series of freestanding buildings. There are not many freestanding buildings in America, and most of them are tall and highly uneconomic towers, despite the excellent precedent set long ago by the oblong Monadnock Building, in Chicago, that last masterpiece of masonry by Burnham & Root. The architects of the slab-sided Secretariat have ignored this precedent by putting a thirty-nine-story skyscraper on their ample plot, in the manner of a real-estate speculator trying to get the maximum possible amount of rentable space. A freestanding building can have light on all four sides, but the architects of the Secretariat have blanked out two sides of it with solid walls of marble.

A WHILE ago, Mr. Wallace Harrison, who was the chairman of the United Nations' Board of Design



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Consultants, explained the decision to build a single tall skyscraper in an address to his brother architects at the Royal Institute of British Architects. "We have found by experience," he told them, "that with conditions similar to those on Manhattan Island a building twenty-five to forty-five stories high is the most efficient and economical." Obviously, the conditions he referred to are the conditions of corporate financing and realty speculation, the conditions that make possible a handsome profit. The United Nations is a non-profit institution. Mr. Harrison then gave the show away by remarking that when one considers only mechanical requirements, "every skyscraper must be built in units not more than fifteen stories high. . . . Thus at approximately every fifteenth floor you have a 'basement' for water tanks, elevator and air-conditioning machinery, and fire protection." In other words, the most efficient and economical height for an office building is not twenty-five to forty-five stories but fifteen. Mr. Harrison and his colleagues have proved the point by inserting those grillwork "basements" only eight stories apart in the Secretariat Building. As for efficiency and economy, he has forgotten that the taller a building is, the greater the space that must be wasted in elevator shafts bypassing the lower floors. Had the several units that are now stacked one upon another to produce the Secretariat been separate buildings, they not merely would have achieved the economy of which Mr. Harrison made so much but would have scaled the Secretariat unit down sufficiently to give visual emphasis to the General Assembly Building (which is to be finished in 1952) and to arrive at a more unified design for the buildings and open spaces. Such a system of related low buildings would also have provided an orderly means of future expansion for the Secretariat, which a single oversize building does not.

Apparently, though, the Board of Design Consultants were hypnotized by Le Corbusier, and Le Corbusier has long been hypnotized by the notion that the skyscraper is a symbol of the modern age. But the fact is that both the skyscraper and Le Corbusier are outmoded. Skyscrapers conceived without respect for human scale or insight into human requirements and values are indeed symbolic, but they are symbols of the way specious considerations of fashion, profit, prestige, abstract aesthetic form—in a word, "the package" of com-

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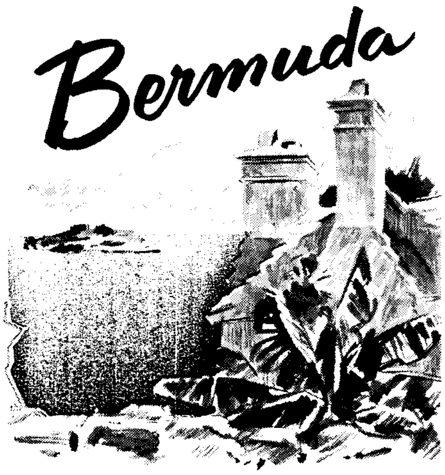

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merce—have taken precedence over the need of human beings for good working and living quarters.

What we have, then, is not a building expressive of the purposes of the United Nations but an extremely fragile aesthetic achievement, whose main lines conform to the ideals of a boom period of shaky finance and large-scale speculation. This sort of modernism goes only skin deep. As a conscious symbol, the Secretariat adds up to zero; as an unconscious one, it is a negative quantity, since it symbolizes the worst practices of New York, not the best hopes of the United Nations. So much for the outside of the building—impeccable but irrelevant. The inside of this package does not even live up to the elegant wrappings. On that matter, I shall presently have more to say.

—LEWIS MUMFORD

•

TO A FELLOW-PASSENGER, SIX MONTHS OLD

Baby, I wish that I were you,
And felt free, as you seem to do,
To scream till everyone is clear
That you are not contented here.
As for myself, I must admit,
Like you, I hate the whole of it:
The air-conditioning is not good;
I'd like it warmer, that I would;
The engineer starts up too rough,
And, started, won't go fast enough.

I see you look malignly round
And scorn the faces you have found;
Your fellow-travellers don't at all
Suit you or me—but *you* can bawl.

O infant, were I but your age,
Wouldn't I, too, cry out in rage!
And let the passengers and crew
Know what I think of them—and you.

—IRWIN EDMAN

•

When the two I's—I as your You, You as mine—deal for a time with any specific "it" (in a specific manner still to be qualified but at any rate with respect to each other) each of the two I's will discover in the thing not only the share he conceded to his You in establishing the thing as "our" thing but also his own share, conceded to himself by the You. Hence the I can have in the response of the You a part of himself as well as of the You. This is what talk between friends can do.—*From "Man: Mutable and Immutable," by Kurt Riezler.*

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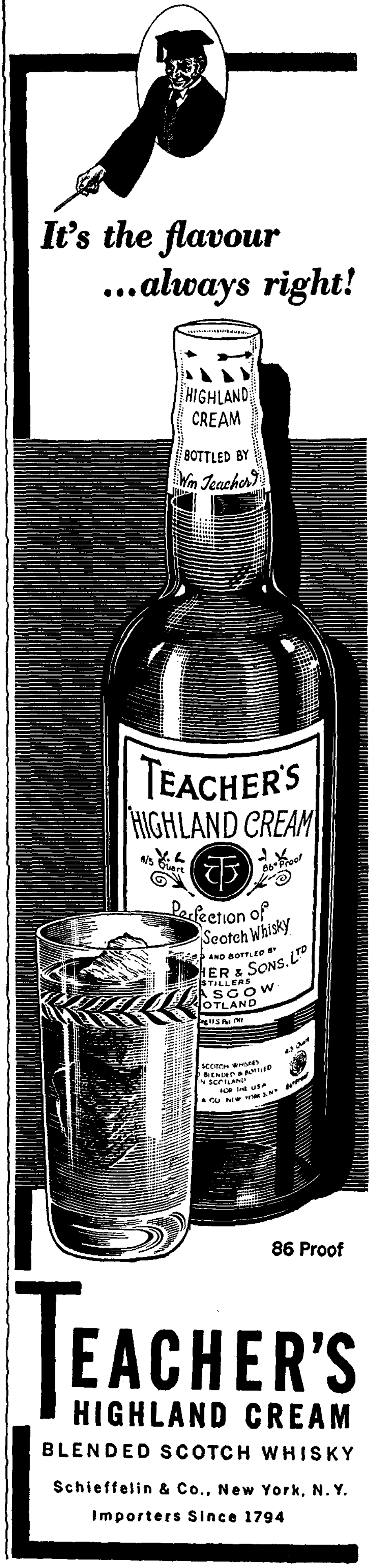
MAMA DROBEK AND THE GREAT AMERICAN GAME

SHORTLY after the end of the war, in August, 1945, I was transferred from an artillery battalion, which I had served with in France and Germany, to a company of soldiers stationed in a small town near Pilsen, in Czechoslovakia. There was little for this company to do in the line of duty, aside from awaiting orders to be shipped back to the United States, and in the line of pleasure there was even less to do, as the town was a farming village consisting of a large lodging house, a scattering of small houses, a few hundred people, and flocks of honking geese. The company, along with some Czech civilians, most of whom commuted to Pilsen, was quartered in the lodging house, a rectangular building with innumerable rooms, long, dark corridors, and stairways that seemed to lead nowhere.

I had a second-floor room overlooking a dirt road that was the town's main thoroughfare. The first morning after I reported to the company, I was dozing in bed when a squat, sturdy woman of fifty-odd burst into the room without knocking, greeted me with a cheerful "*Dobrý den!*" ("Good day!"), and set to work sweeping. She had a weather-beaten face, with moist black eyes that shone like new buttons, and she clopped around noisily in a pair of oversize G.I. shoes. When she finished cleaning, she gaily repeated her "*Dobrý den!*" and bustled out into the hall. At breakfast, I inquired about her, and found out that the soldiers called her Mama Drobek and regarded her as an extraordinarily dynamic cleaning woman. Her daily schedule, I eventually learned, went something like this: She would rise about 5 A.M., at her house at one end of the village, and cook breakfast for her husband and five youngsters—a boy and four girls—who were the children of two sons that had been killed in the war. After washing the dishes, she would feed the livestock, which included a goat and a flock of geese, and would then leave the house, driving the geese in front of her down the road and carrying on her back a big laundry basket. In this basket there would usually be her family's soiled laundry at the bottom, then a partition of brown paper, and on top of that clean laundry for various soldiers and civilians at the lodging house. When she came abreast of the hostelry, she would stop off; the geese, familiar with the way, would continue on down the road to a meadow, waddle across it to a pond, and there disport themselves. As Mama Drobek went from room to room, cleaning, she would distribute the clean clothes and collect dirty ones, and, after she had finished her cleaning, proceed with them to the meadow, where she would wash them, and her own laundry, in the pond and lay all the pieces out to dry on the grass. By this time, it would be almost noon, and she would return home and start cooking again. In the afternoon, she would gather a half dozen or so bundles of brushwood from various spots around the village, trundle them home on her back, then pitch hay in a neighbor's field for a while, and, finally, about four-thirty, go back to the pond, pick up her laundry, and drive her flock of geese home. After the evening meal, she would iron and mend clothes until bedtime. Nobody seemed to know what her husband did; he was seen only occasionally, when he rode through the village on a bicycle.

Mama Drobek's energy and enthusiasm, while not contagious, were certainly not unpleasant, and after she had cleaned my room a few times and washed a bundle of my clothes, I found myself welcoming her arrival, although it sometimes woke me from a deep sleep. She could speak and understand only a few words of English, and I was a total loss at Czech, but, even so, while she swept or dusted and I lay or sat up in bed, we managed to carry on lively conversations, largely in pantomime. One morning, I went through the motions of feeding geese, sweeping floors, washing clothes, and carrying firewood. "It's too much for you," I added.

Mama Drobek laughed and shook her head. After pointing at herself, she bent over, holding one hand out at a small child's height, and then went through the motions I had just completed. "Before the war," she said haltingly, "the same. With Germans here, the same. With Americans, the same. No



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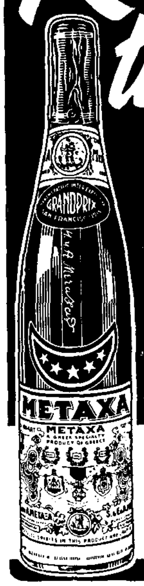

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matter who come, for me is the same." She looked at me for a moment to make sure I took it all in, then, with a bright smile lighting up her face, went on sweeping the floor.

THINGS would probably have gone along smoothly, and we soldiers would never have seen Mama Drobek upset, if it hadn't been that one morning, during my third week with the company, a local farmer started building a barn on the field that we had been using as our baseball diamond. Many of the officers and enlisted men played baseball, some because they were enthusiastic about the game, others, like me, because they were desperate for something to do. There were several teams in a loosely organized league. I was a substitute right fielder on a team led by our commanding officer, a lanky and good-natured captain named McCall, who had been a professional ballplayer in civilian life and who believed that playing baseball was the finest way in the world to exercise, to pass time, or to earn a living. Captain McCall was, of course, shocked when he heard about the barn, and immediately dispatched scouts to find a new field. Later that day, they reported that the best ground for a baseball diamond—*in fact, the only* unencumbered ground near the village—was the meadow where Mama Drobek dried her clothes. Although the meadow didn't actually belong to her, she had squatter's rights, as we knew, but we assumed that she wouldn't object to our playing on it, inasmuch as her drying occupied a relatively small part of it, in front of the pond, where the outfield would be. So, the next morning, we set to work laying out bases in this meadow and setting up a wire backstop behind home plate.

That afternoon, late in a game in which I appeared briefly, Mama Drobek returned to the meadow from haying. She didn't seem to resent our invasion. She watched us play for a while, and then the idea of so much unused space between players apparently bothered her, for several times she waved her hands in front of her, as though she were shooing geese, in an effort to get the outfielders to move in closer. When they made it plain that they had to stay where they were, she shrugged, and cheerfully took her geese and laundry home. The next afternoon, my team wasn't scheduled to play, but as I had nothing else to do, I went to the game as a spectator, one of several dozen soldiers who stood around the backstop and cheered or booed intermittently. Cap-

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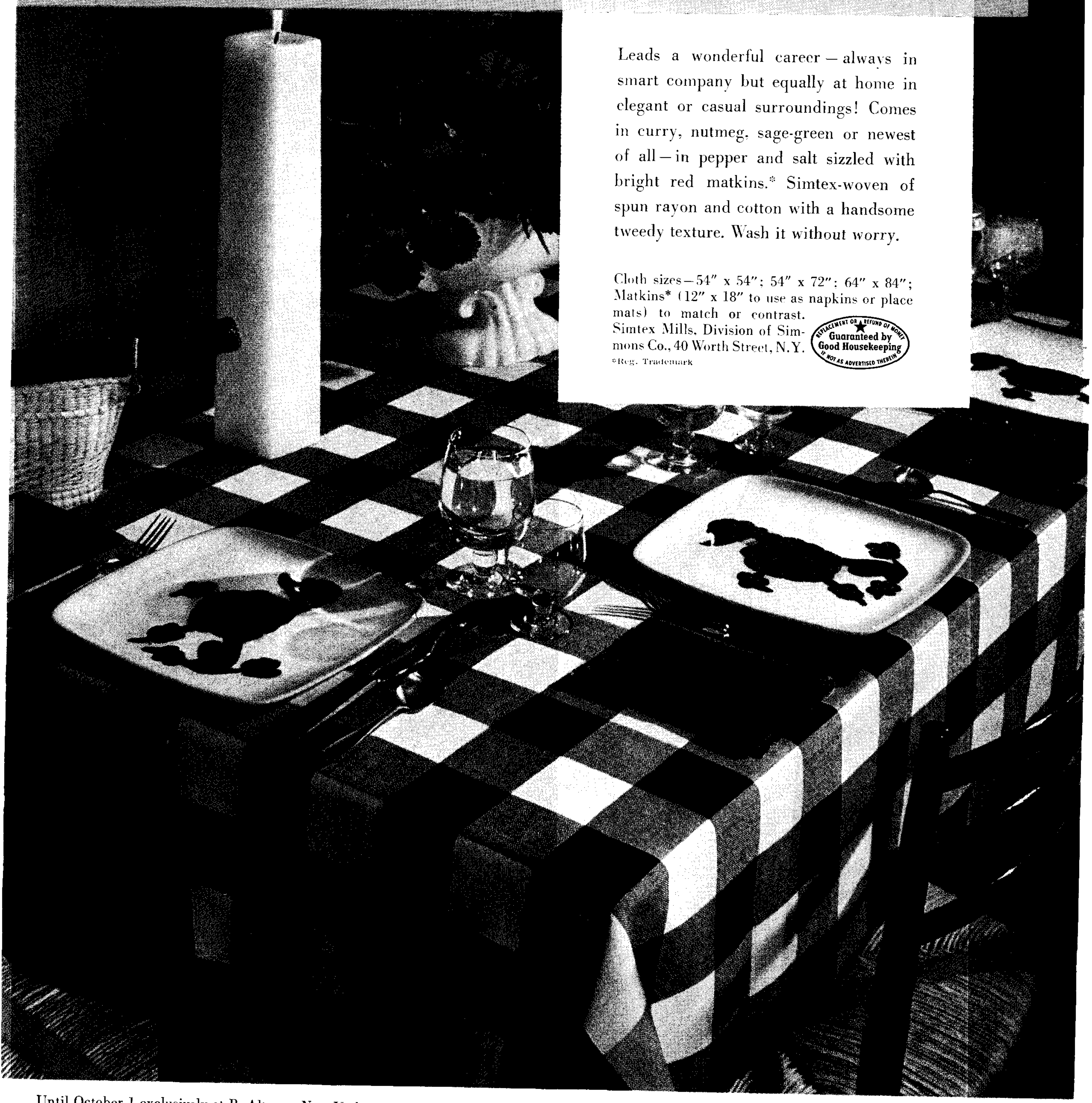

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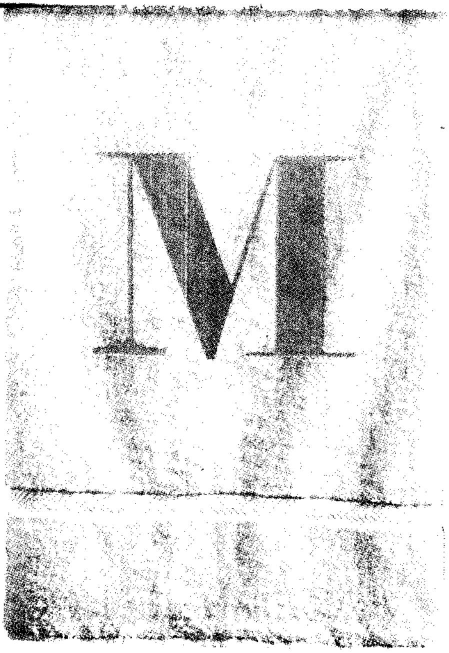

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tain McCall was there; he attended every game, as player, spectator, or even umpire. Mama Drobek had more laundry than usual that day and had spread her clothes a little farther than before into the outfield. There still seemed to be plenty of room, however, and nothing untoward happened until the fourth inning, when a heavy hitter belted a long fly to left field, and the fielder, racing back frantically to catch it, tangled his feet in a tablecloth and plunged to the ground, missing the ball. The tablecloth was dirtied and torn. Mama Drobek was away pitching hay at the time, and when she returned to get her clothes and geese, Captain McCall apologized, paid her for the damage out of his own pocket, and endeavored to explain to her that the accident was unavoidable; the fielder just *had* to try to catch the ball. It was easy to see by the expression on her face that the whole thing didn't make sense to her, but Captain McCall let it go at that.

The third afternoon, in the first half of the eighth inning, Mama Drobek had returned from haying and was just starting to gather up her clothes when the center fielder, trying to pull in a hard-hit fly ball, dashed back across some khaki shirts.

"*Přestaň!*" she screamed. "*Přestaň!* Stop!"

Her cries, of course, were too late to do any good, and again there was an explanation by our commanding officer to try to convince her that the fielder hadn't trod on the shirts deliberately. She retained her good humor but appeared completely baffled, especially when two of the players, a second baseman and a catcher, identified the shirts as theirs and said they didn't mind if those garments were returned a trifle soiled. After that, however, she took no chances. Instead of drying her laundry at the edge of the outfield, she carried it about a quarter of a mile down the road to another field, too small for baseball but suitable for drying clothes. She was good-natured about the episode, and seemed delighted when, the next day, as she came to round up her geese, Captain McCall thanked her for being so helpful.

EVERYTHING went fine until Thursday afternoon of the following week, when my team was at bat in the last half of the ninth inning of a scoreless game. Mama Drobek stood at the edge of the pond, beside the basket of clean laundry she had brought from

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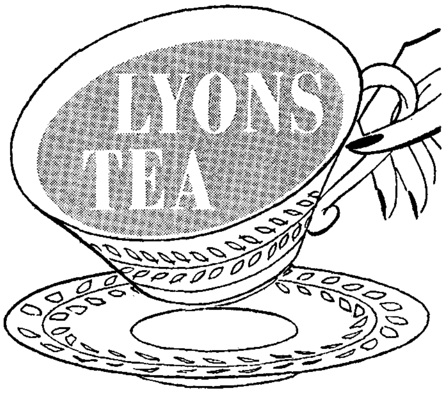

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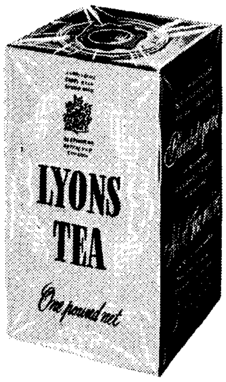

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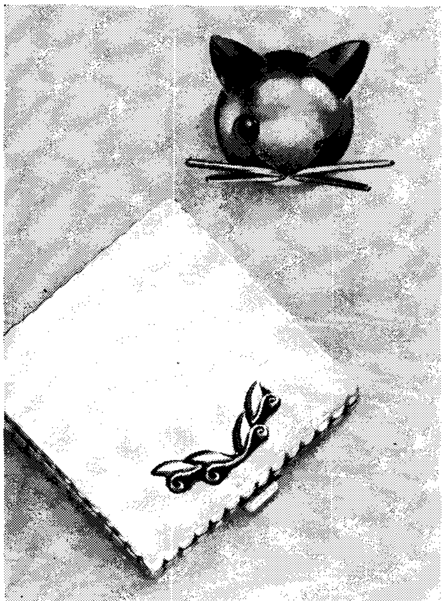

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the other field, and, apparently attracted by the tense atmosphere of the game, was looking on intently. At this point, Captain McCall strode up to the plate, and there was a breathless moment as the first pitch came in. He swung at the ball with his usual lazily smooth motion and met it perfectly. The crack alone told us the ball was going a long way, and we watched it heading directly for center field, still rising as it passed over the head of the fielder and started out over the pond. I thought it would clear the pond, but then, its momentum gone, it plummeted down to the water and neatly hit the head of one of Mama Drobek's geese. It was impossible, but it happened.

Mama Drobek shrieked wildly and waded out into the pond to where the goose lay, motionless, in the water. The other soldiers and I just stared, caught somewhere between amazement at the phenomenal, game-winning home run and virtual unbelief at what had befallen the goose. Mama Drobek picked the bird up tenderly, cradled it in her arms, and, with tears streaming down her face, temporarily abandoned her flock and her basket of laundry, and had set off on a short cut to the road back to the village before any of us even thought of trying to make amends. After we returned to the lodging house and cleaned up, Captain McCall and I and a couple of other players went to her house, but no one there would open the door. That night, a civilian at the lodging house confirmed what we all felt sure had happened—the goose had been killed.

When Mama Drobek came to clean my room the next morning, she burst energetically in, as usual, but she gave me no cheerful greeting. In fact, as she swept and tidied up, with her head bent down and her lips pressed together, she didn't give the slightest sign of being aware I was in the room. I felt embarrassed and wasn't sure what to do. At last, as she finished her work and started for the door, I said, "We tried to see you yesterday, Mama Drobek. What's the matter?"

She swung around then and looked at me with hard and unfriendly eyes, and, her mouth barely open, she said, in a kind of hiss, "Beez-ball!" Before I had a chance to reply, she turned and opened the door, went out, and slammed it behind her.

That afternoon, on the way to the ball field, I told Captain McCall and several others about this reaction of Mama Drobek's, but I daresay none of us was prepared for what we found when we arrived. The infield was everywhere spotted with laundry; even the wire backstop had some pairs of G.I. underwear dangling from its top. And, near third base, Mama Drobek stood waiting for us, an old hunting rifle gripped under her right arm. We all saw the businesslike look on her face, and a few feet from the backstop we came to an unmilitary halt. Captain McCall pondered the situation a moment or two, and then, looking a little like Leo Durocher walking from the dugout to expostulate with an umpire, he started purposefully down the third-base line. For a few seconds, Mama Drobek didn't move but just watched him. Then she abruptly raised the gun to her shoulder and pulled the bolt back.

Captain McCall stopped short.

"Mama Drobek," he said, "I want to talk to you."

We heard her answering in a stream of Czech.

"Now, hold it," he said, moving cautiously toward her again.

Her eyes narrowed as she took a dead aim with the gun. Captain McCall stopped short again and tried to speak, but another rush of Czech overwhelmed him. He gave an exaggerated shrug and walked back to where we were standing.

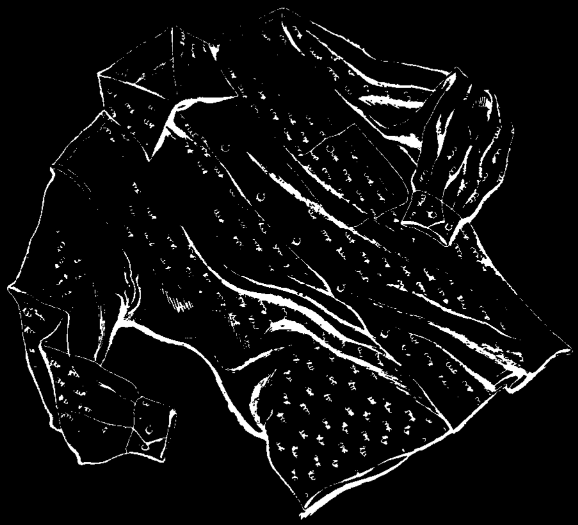
"Somebody else like to talk to her?" he asked.

No one volunteered. One of the men asked the Captain if he thought an interpreter would be of any help, and the Captain said "Maybe." I remembered that a man named Kovarnik, a Czech schoolteacher who spoke English, lived down the hall from me in the lodging house, but the trouble was he taught in Pilsen, and didn't get back until the middle of the afternoon.

"Well," Captain McCall said when I told him this, "guess we have to let the game go today."

He gave me orders to see to it that Mr. Kovarnik and Mama Drobek came to his office, on the first floor of the lodging house, later in the afternoon. Then we all trailed raggedly off the field, leaving Mama Drobek in possession.

When Mr. Kovarnik got back from Pilsen, I was waiting for him outside the lodging house. He was a short, plump man who wore black hornrims and cropped his graying hair short. I gave him a detailed account of what had happened, emphasizing our warm feeling for Mama Drobek, and told him what the Captain wanted. He said he would be very happy to act as interpreter



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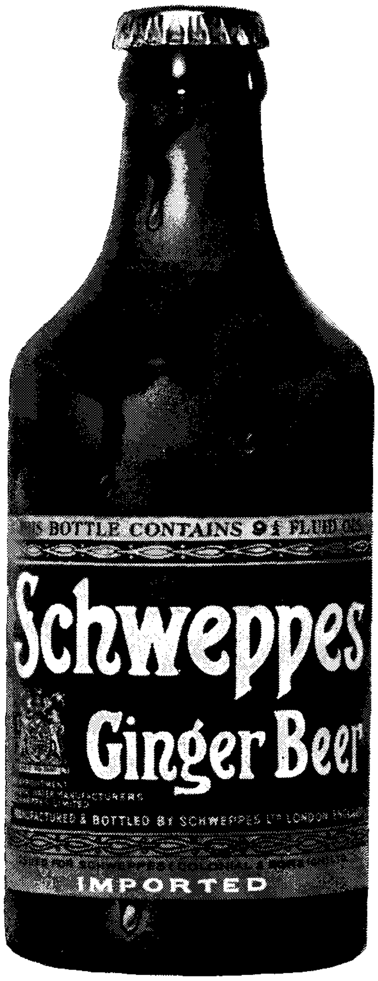
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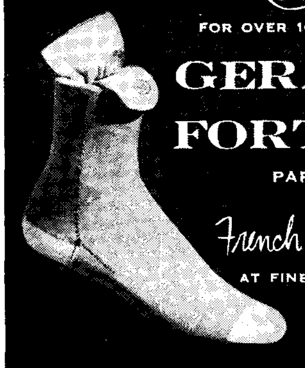

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for us, and, at my request, he went at once to bring Mama Drobek back from the field where, as usual at that hour, she would be pitching hay.

TEN minutes later, the three of us entered Captain McCall's office and stationed ourselves just inside the door, Mama Drobek between Mr. Kovarnik and me. Whatever Mr. Kovarnik, who looked flushed and important, had said to persuade her to return with him, it was obvious that she had not been conciliated. Still flecked with bits of hay, she glared at Captain McCall, who sat, smiling, behind his desk on the opposite side of the room, with the company clerk at one elbow and his first sergeant at the other.

"Will you please tell her that we are all very sorry for what has happened," Captain McCall said, nodding toward Mr. Kovarnik.

The schoolteacher turned to Mama Drobek and spoke a few words in Czech. As soon as he had finished, Mama Drobek came back at him volubly, and she would have gone on for quite a while if he had not held up his hand to silence her.

"She says that if you wanted a goose, she would have given you one," he said to Captain McCall. "The one you killed was one of her oldest geese, not good for eating. It was like a child to her. And—"

"Tell her it was an accident," Captain McCall interrupted. "We didn't mean to do it."

Before Mr. Kovarnik had finished translating this, Mama Drobek snapped something back at him, shaking her head stubbornly and pointing to her eyes.

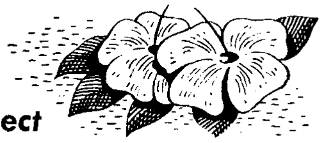
"She says she saw you kill the goose with her own eyes," the schoolteacher said, with a note of accusation in his voice.

"Now, look," Captain McCall said impatiently. "It's just not possible—tell her this—to hit a ball wherever you want to. It can go right, left, anywhere. Sometimes you pop it up in the air—The thing is, it's unpredictable. *You* understand that, don't you?"

Mr. Kovarnik smiled and nodded quickly.

"You can also tell her," the Captain said, "this is absolutely the first time I've ever heard of a goose being killed by a baseball. A pure accident."

As soon as she heard the word "baseball," Mama Drobek broke in, gesturing violently at Mr. Kovarnik. The schoolteacher shrugged and answered her. There was another long speech from Mama Drobek, with more gestures.



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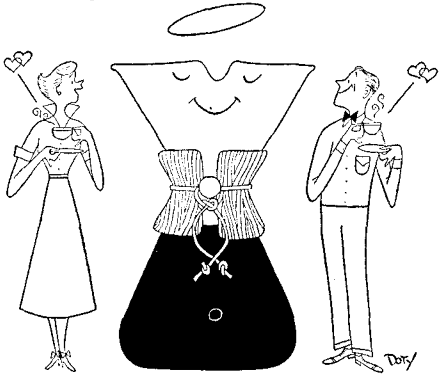

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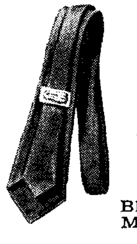

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Mr. Kovarnik shook his head. They seemed to have forgotten that anyone else was in the room.

"Well, what's she saying?" Captain McCall asked, finally.

"She does not understand this baseball," Mr. Kovarnik said. "She saw you kill the goose. She thinks the game crazy if you do not know what you are doing."

"Now, hold on, there," Captain McCall said, his face reddening. "Just hold on. Is she trying to say we're all crazy in America? Does she know it's the most popular game in the States? You might just tell her a few things." He gripped the edge of his desk, as if trying to restrain himself, and it was apparent to all of us that the Captain's love of baseball was beginning to run away with him. "The best ballplayers in our country are *heroes*, national heroes," he declared, and raced on, forgetting that Mr. Kovarnik had to translate what he was saying. The schoolteacher leaned forward to catch every word, nodding sympathetically and raising his eyebrows at the words Captain McCall stressed. "Why, even the President goes to games," the Captain continued. "Would she call the *President* of the United States crazy? Do *we* look crazy? Baseball just happens to be our national sport. It makes us less homesick when we play it. All right, a goose got killed. We're prepared to make it up to her. But let's not run down baseball. Now, tell her that." Captain McCall expelled what was left of his breath in a sigh of exasperation.

Mr. Kovarnik gazed momentarily into space, his eyes wistful. Then he turned to Mama Drobek and spoke fervently, with such expressive gestures that even we, who couldn't understand a word of what he was saying, were quite touched. We could tell, as he went on, that Mama Drobek was being affected, too. Her face softened all at once, and a sad expression came into her eyes. When Mr. Kovarnik had finished, she nodded vigorously and said something in a low tone, looking pleasantly at Captain McCall as she spoke.

Mr. Kovarnik smiled. "She says she is sorry," he said. "She says she did not understand."

"Is everything all right, then?" Captain McCall asked.

"I think everything is all right," Mr. Kovarnik said.

"Fine," the Captain said. "Now, please tell her we have bought another goose for her, to make up for what we did."

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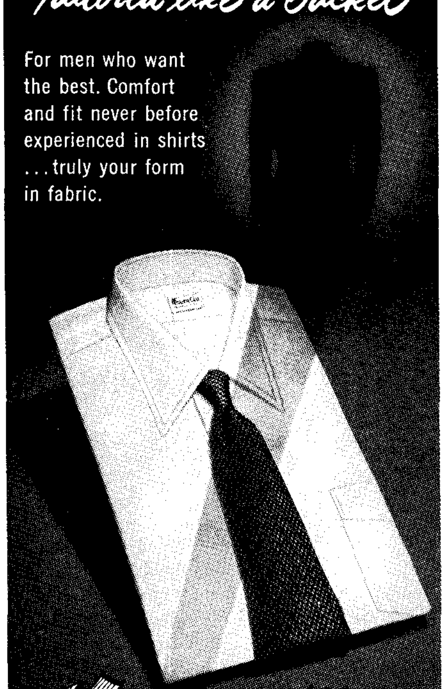

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this to Mama Drobek, the first sergeant went into an adjoining room and came back leading a large goose on a cord. He walked over to Mama Drobek and put the cord in her hand. Mama Drobek could only nod happily, her eyes wet, while Mr. Kovarnik clasped and unclasped his hands in a kind of ecstasy.

Suddenly, and obviously on an impulse, Captain McCall opened a drawer of his desk and took out a new baseball. With his pen, he wrote on its white cover, speaking each word as he put it down: "To Mama Drobek, for her coöperation in helping the great American game."

He rose from his chair and took the ball over to Mama Drobek, and Mr. Kovarnik translated the inscription for her. "Thank you," she said to Captain McCall, in English. "Thank you." Turning, she left the room, clutching the baseball in one hand and leading the goose with the other. Mr. Kovarnik bowed solemnly to us and followed her.

"Well," Captain McCall said, smiling again, "I was afraid she'd never see it our way."

"That President stuff did it, Captain," the first sergeant said. "You even impressed the schoolteacher."

If we had any doubts left about Mama Drobek's feeling toward us, they were dispelled the next afternoon. There was no laundry on the playing field, not a goose in the pond, and no Mama Drobek in sight. She had evidently found some other place to water her flock. We didn't see her until the game was well along. She came up the road from a nearby wood, carrying a bundle of sticks on her back. She stopped near the backstop, put down her load, and, with her hands on her square hips, watched the game for a little while. When Captain McCall, who was coaching at third base, called out, "More pepper, guys, more pepper," she nodded approvingly at him, then hoisted the bundle of firewood to her back and continued briskly on up the road.

Two afternoons later, I met Mr. Kovarnik in the hallway of the lodging house as he arrived from Pilsen, a briefcase in one hand, and I stopped him and gave him my congratulations on the fine interpreting job he had done for us.

"It was nothing," he said, shrugging. "I was happy to do it."

"No," I said, "it's pretty tough explaining the American attitude toward baseball to someone who doesn't understand the game."

Mr. Kovarnik set the briefcase down,

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took off his glasses, blew on them, and cleaned them slowly with his handkerchief. Then he smiled deprecatingly and put them on. "Perhaps yes," he said, "since the game is very strange to me, too. My thought was: How could a peasant woman understand what this kind of game could mean to you Americans? I had to use my own judgment."

Mr. Kovarnik paused, and smiled at me again.

"Well, how did you explain it to her?" I asked.

Not quite satisfied with the cleaning job he had done on his glasses, he took them off once more, rubbed them with the handkerchief again, and held them up to the light. "I perhaps simplified," he said. "In an effort to show her the full extent of the Captain's remorse at what happened, I told her that he considered her like a mother to you Americans. So, by killing her goose through this innocent game, it was as if he had driven a knife into the breast of his own mother."

"Oh," I said, glancing away.

"To me," he said, carefully replacing his glasses, "this seemed something she would better understand." My face must have gone a little red, for he quickly asked, "Was I not right in saying it?"

"It was fine," I said. "Thanks a lot."

"You are welcome." Mr. Kovarnik bowed slightly, picked up his briefcase, and continued on down the hall.

—FREDERICK L. KEEFE

•

Bloodhounds said a man fitting his description had been reported seen Sunday morning in the vicinity of Highway 11 at the northeastern edge of the city.—*Jackson (Miss.) Daily News.*

They mention which way he was headed?

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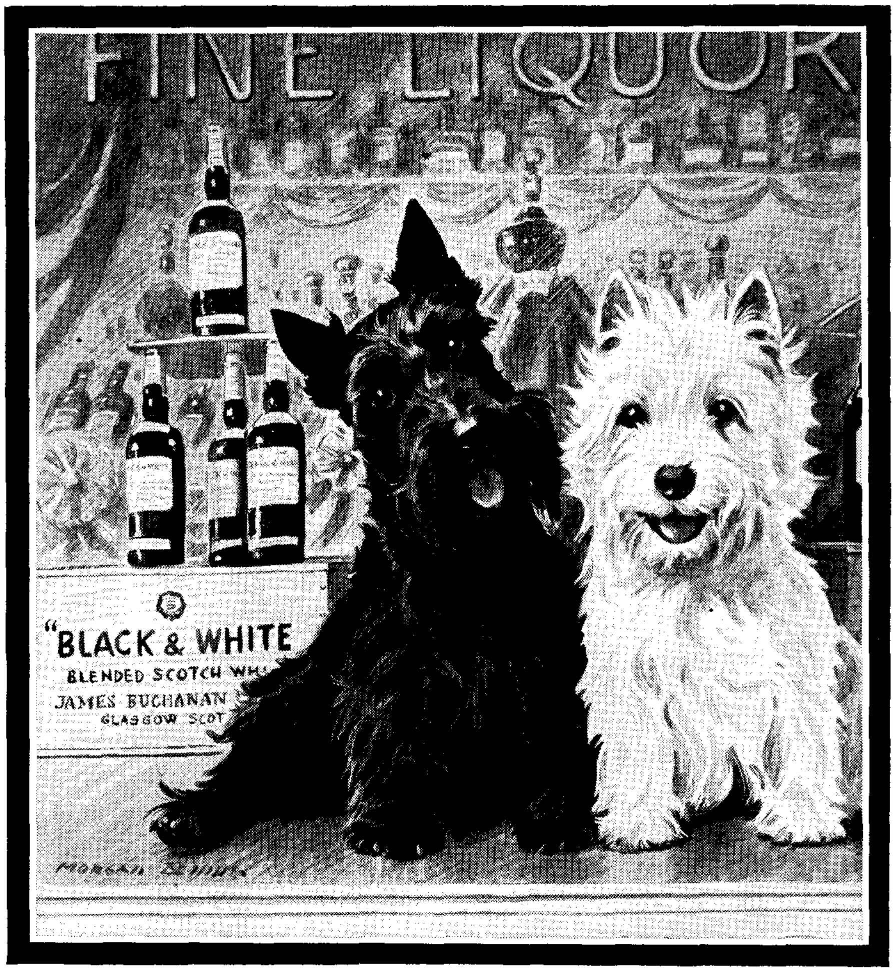
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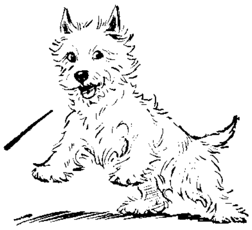

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LETTER FROM HONG KONG

SEPTEMBER 1

HONG KONG is a fine place for comparing different ways of treating, or mistreating, news, because two totally disparate varieties of it—the Chinese Nationalist and the Chinese Communist—are displayed here daily. Anyone who follows the news in Hong Kong soon discovers that truth is not absolute at all, but factional, like so much else these days. Since Hong Kong is one of the world's main news-gathering arenas, the factionalism gets spread to all corners, muddling the world's knowledge of things. This, of course, is the aim of many who work here.

Even if there were no Chinese politics, Hong Kong would be fertile soil for untruths. Traders in bullion plant rumors here in order to manipulate the price of gold, and the rumors flourish with tropical richness. Last spring, a set of four ran through the business district in one morning: America and Russia had gone to war, the Labour Government had fallen in England, the last diplomatic tie between London and Peiping had been severed, and Red Chinese troops had begun to mass on the Hong Kong border. These items were widely believed until the afternoon papers came out, with their usual dull rash of headlines (they get little fresh news from the Western world, because of the way the time zones break), and meanwhile the price of gold bars had gone up smartly. Again, in June, the Russian Ambassador in Washington was reported, through legitimate channels, to be making farewell calls before going on summer leave; this intelligence was embroidered here to the point of signifying a final diplomatic rift, and again gold went up. Often the rumors are self-generated local ones. A while ago, for instance, word spread that Communist agents here were buying three hundred sewing machines of a type specially adapted for making parachutes; this canard even got a fair amount of space in the press until it was denied by the local head of the Singer Sewing Machine Company, the only firm that could handle such an order. The susceptibility of the poorer Chinese, who make up the bulk of Hong Kong's population, to wild stories was shown by a recent account, published in the *South China Morning Post*, of the fright that swept some of the large boat-dwelling communities here over a supposed leprous monster, on the prowl for human entrails with which to ease his sickness.

Such naïve fabrications come, go, and come again, in company with the more serious ones. The latter are greatly helped on their way by Hong Kong's peculiarities as an observation post—its remoteness from some of the places it tries to observe; its mixture of British, Chinese, and cosmopolitan characteristics; and the bias of one of its important sources of information, the refugees who have poured in here from China. Most of these are self-exiled "White" Chinese, who naturally do the new regime at home no favors. Hong Kong's remoteness from much of the Chinese scene has such a steadily corrupting effect on the news that one feels a mathematical formula might be improvised: the greater the distance, the greater the distortion. The trouble has been aggravated since the Reds overran the mainland in early 1950, but it was bad enough before that. One example from those days was a supposed coup d'état, over Labor Day in 1949, by General Lu Han, the war-lord governor of Yunnan Province. (Yunnan is a wild plateau in China's southwest hinterland, peopled largely by non-Chinese aborigines; central governments have always had trouble ruling it.) What really happened in Yunnan then was that Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek took steps to crack down on General Lu, who had been growing independent. Chiang had prepared for the operation in time-honored ways—moving troops toward Yunnan, slipping plainclothesmen into its capital, and so forth. Lu sized things up and gave in with barely a struggle. That's all there was to it, but the idea got around Hong Kong that Lu had started things by staging a coup aimed at driving all Nationalist officials from his province; Chiang's movements, according to this version, were defensive countermeasures. Practically all the foreign reporters in Hong Kong, including the present writer, were taken in, and for some days the Yunnan affair was reported as a close, active fight, with this military force being thrown into the battle and that one being driven back. The residents of Yunnan were astonished when they eventually read these accounts of what had been

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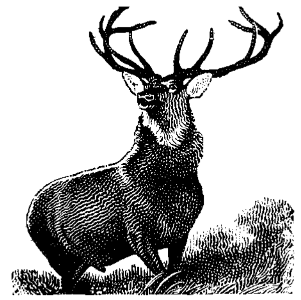

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for them a quiet, if touchy, weekend.

Many such fantasies were visited on the world during the Nationalists' final days on the mainland. But then, at least, they could be disproved quickly, for anyone interested could go to Yunnan, or wherever, and find out the truth for himself. This can no longer be done, and the fantasies persist for months. A case in point was an argument, still unresolved, about a nearby question of fact in the spring of last year: Were or were not the Chinese Reds building up a large troop concentration in Kwangsi Province, four hundred miles west of Hong Kong, as a threat to the French across the border in Indo-China? Some of the best intelligence men here—Hong Kong is a popular spot for intelligence work—maintained that such a buildup existed, and they could give plenty of details. Their dope apparently came from Chinese travellers on the Canton-Hankow railway, a main artery serving both Hong Kong and Kwangsi. On the other hand, the French military, who had a powerful force guarding the Kwangsi border, and supposedly good ground intelligence, denied that there was any buildup to speak of. They did so even though it seemingly would have been to their advantage—in getting more American help, say—to claim otherwise. The French version was reinforced by stories of wholesale anti-Communist guerrilla troubles that kept drifting out of Kwangsi—troubles that could scarcely have arisen had there been a large buildup. These opposed, yet professional and expert, views of Kwangsi affairs prospered side by side in Hong Kong, and reporters could take their choice. Some did, and flat accounts of each version were sent abroad, without qualification. The question was never settled, because when the Korean war began, most of the better Communist units in South China were shipped north, and the buildup, if indeed there had been one, evaporated.

In the year and a half since then, the problem of guesswork news reports has got worse. In Hong Kong now, you can learn that the airfields outside Canton, about ninety miles away, are being improved and lengthened to take heavy bombers or jets; you can also learn that the fields are neglected and grass is growing on their runways. It is often reported that huge Russian airfields and submarine bases are being completed on Hainan, a Red Chinese island outpost three hundred miles southwest of here; few Hong Kong observers believe these reports, but they cannot be disproved. The size of anti-Communist guerrilla movements on the Red mainland is a particularly elusive item. In general, the American observers have thought them larger than the British and the French have. No one can be sure, though, without going to the scene—a clear impossibility. We Americans, as the greatest potential source of aid to guerrillas, have been exposed to more slanted information in this regard than anybody else. There is a strong conviction hereabouts that the Chinese Nationalists keep special agents in Hong Kong to feed Americans exaggerated guerrilla stories. Then there are the promoters of the anti-Nationalist *and* anti-Communist, or Third Force, guerrillas. To organize an effective guerrilla movement in China now, you need at least two things—guerrillas and outside help. Getting either one makes it easier to get the other, and it doesn't much matter at which end you start. So Hong Kong is the headquarters of many shoestring Third Force men, who try to persuade Americans that they have a big following on the mainland, so that they will be given arms and money, which will enable them to get the following in fact. There is no way of checking on their claims.

Another hindrance to the Western grasp of Chinese events, which existed throughout China in the old days as it does now in Hong Kong, is the Chinese attitude toward precise detail. By tradition, the Chinese have little of the Western love for figures, dates, and statistics. In reporting things, they rely more on legends, jokes, and metaphors. Whenever they cannot avoid figures, they go in for round ones, often inflated. The Chinese word "*wan*," literally "ten thousand," is often used just to express the idea of a great many. The Chinese language is wonderful for poetry or vivid talk but notably inexact; its verbs have no tenses, its nouns no number. It has been one of the great stumbling blocks to Westerners who would modernize China and introduce Occidental industrial techniques. An additional confusion creeps in whenever written translations are made either way between Chinese and English—languages that are poles apart in their mechanics. The Chinese characters for "General MacArthur" and "Senator McCarthy" are almost indistinguishable, for example; readers of Chinese newspapers are often puzzled as to which man is speaking.

IT has long been debated whether the Nationalists do a very clever or a very inept job of influencing world opinion. The debate is inevitable, for the Nationalist style of propaganda is so outlandish from a Western point of view that there is no criterion for evaluating it. One's distance from the source of the propaganda also affects the side one takes in the debate. Nationalist propaganda seldom convinces those who follow it closely, and perhaps it doesn't try. Its main targets are those who are far away and hazy on the facts. Yet it shouldn't be assumed that Nationalist propaganda is shaped only by a wish to deceive. It also reflects an ancient Chinese feeling that word and action are not related—that if things are unpleasant, they can be softened by saying that they aren't. The truth, according to this idea, should not be told if it might wound or offend persons involved, especially important persons. In the old Chinese Empire, all battles were customarily reported to the capital as victories; courtiers there who wanted to learn how the war was actually going had to find out whether the "victories" were getting farther away or coming nearer. This tradition has always been strong in the Nationalist handling of war news. During most of the Nationalists' last months on the mainland, their Army spokesman was a General Teng Wen-yi. General Teng held weekly conferences for the foreign press; during his tenure, the Nationalists were in reality always losing, but each week he gave an optimistic picture of things—a picture that all but his greenest listeners knew was false, and one that he himself had to disregard the next week. His method was calculated to please Nationalist generals, who often followed the papers and who, coming as a rule from conservative backgrounds, were steeped in the old ways. And he was presumably successful, for he not only kept his job but rose in favor while he had it.

It is not uncommon for purveyors of propaganda to be tripped up by their own line. There are people here who think that the Nationalists have been tripped up by their use of the scornful term "bandits" for their Communist foes. During long stretches of the civil war, the Communists were bandits, and nothing else, in official parlance. Now, true bandits are a fixture in the vast expanse of Chinese history, and in the past they consistently behaved along standard lines. Almost always, they were armed groups, drawn from the peasantry and closely tied to it, that rose against the law in hard times. The remedy for them was also standard. The officials and landlords would withdraw into the

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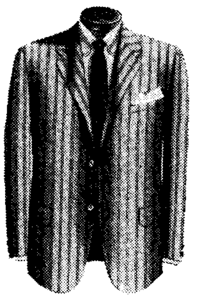

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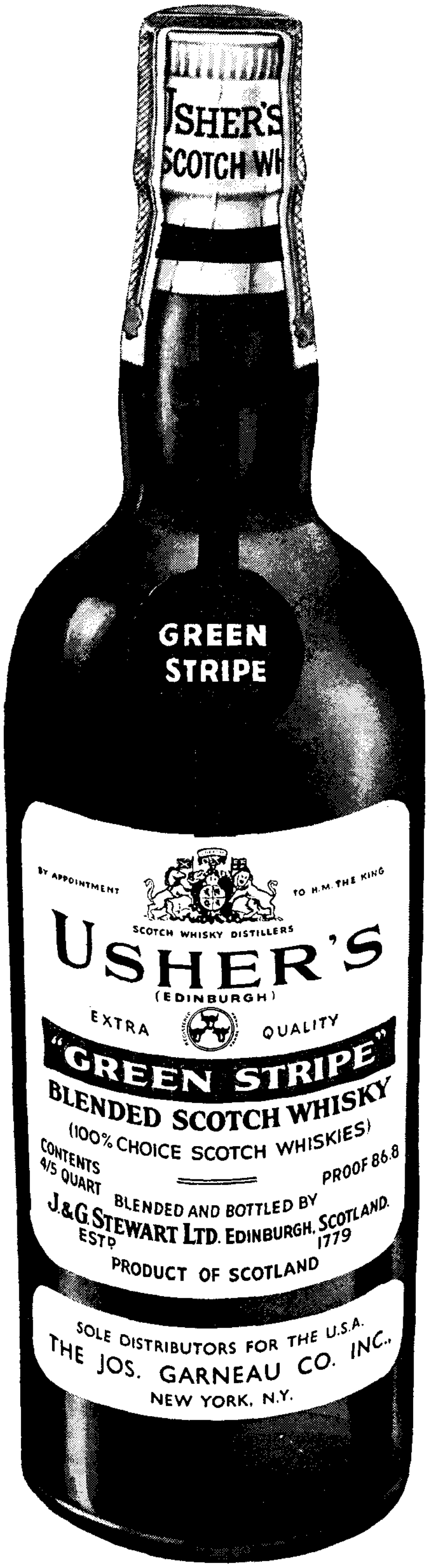
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nearest walled town, where food and other supplies were stored in quantity. They would wait there for the banditry to subside, as it usually did, and then sally out to restore order. The trouble would be localized, the bandits being poorly armed, poorly led, and lacking in outside support. The Communists of a few years ago, who had well-trained, well-led, well-integrated forces, were something far different. But the Nationalists not only persisted in calling them bandits but treated them the way bandits have classically been treated. They withdrew into the cities, thinking that all would be well if they just held on. Thus they allowed their enemy, who had better mobility and better intelligence, to knock off cities and armies one by one, and, largely in this way, to seize the mainland. The point can be overstressed, but there are those who blame the Nationalist downfall on this semantic trap.

Wishful thinking and the natural desire to hit back at the Reds have begotten many fake stories about the Chinese Communist regime, which often start in Formosa and then cross over to Hong Kong. Sometimes, indeed, they bounce between the two places for a while, growing as they go. A story may crop up in Hong Kong that a tank has been seen north of the colony's border, in Red territory. This may get printed in a Hong Kong paper, picked up from there by a news agency, and cabled to Formosa. The agency may doubt its truth, but by carefully noting the source—the Hong Kong paper—it will seek to avoid responsibility. On the island, the story will be printed by a Formosan paper, but perhaps without any mention of its source, and perhaps with embellishments. The editor of another, or even of the same, news agency will see it there and will combine it with one or two additional items that have been floating around but haven't seemed worth using. Say the editor has on his spike a Nationalist report of Red tanks near Swatow, a seaport a hundred and seventy miles northeast of the Hong Kong border. If he adds this to the new story, he has some meagre ground for a speculative story about a large armored buildup in the Hong Kong area. He writes this story, and back it goes to Hong Kong, where the first, one-tank author hails it as corroboration of his original questionable job, and where his competitors get aboard the band wagon in self-defense, making a belated effort not to be scooped. From Hong Kong, the story can be cabled, with still more shaky details and speculation, to the

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outside world, where it is now big enough to cause a stir. It can even go back to Formosa and settle in the files of the Ministry of National Defense, whence it can issue a few weeks later as military intelligence and a brand-new story, its first incarnation having been forgotten.

The false news runs like a stream. There are, for instance, many Russians in China, but on May 28, 1950, there could hardly have been one-tenth of the three hundred thousand who were reported to be there by the Nationalist Army news agency. Nowadays it is easier than it used to be for the Nationalists to portray the terrible life on the mainland, as there is more sound material to work with. Much of it is made available by the Reds themselves; Peiping puts out bales of stuff on the wholesale purges of "counter-revolutionaries" in China, and Formosa has only to pass Peiping's figures on. In addition, Nationalist intelligence is said to have improved a lot in the past few years, especially in reporting Red troop movements. On the other hand, the Nationalists still run wild on stories about the lives and intrigues of high Communists. Early this year, Mao Tse-tung dropped out of sight for a long period (he has a way of going into seclusion), and in no time at all Formosa had him, variously, dead, near-dead, and living in Moscow, an orgy of rose-colored news that stopped only when he incontrovertibly attended a May Day parade in Peiping. Some Red generals have been killed in print by the Nationalists over and over again. One of the most persistent diers has been General Chen Yi, military commander in East China. Last winter, though, General Chen stopped dying for a while and took up deserting. In Hong Kong, there were almost daily reports that he had changed sides—reports that never proved true and that were most unlikely on the face of them, as that was the great period of Red success in Korea. A year ago, it was eagerly asserted that Mme. Sun Yat-sen, the pro-Communist widow of the Nationalist counterpart of George Washington, had turned against Peiping; she is, of course, still there, making strong Party-line speeches. The chance can never be ruled out that one of these stories *will* prove true. But the odds are against it—a fact that rarely keeps the stories from being cabled out of Hong Kong by someone and getting a good play in America.

The unreliability of Nationalist propaganda was demonstrated during the Hainan campaign of last year. Before the

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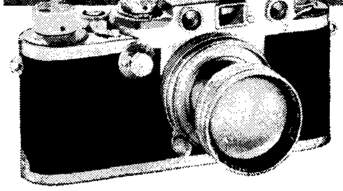

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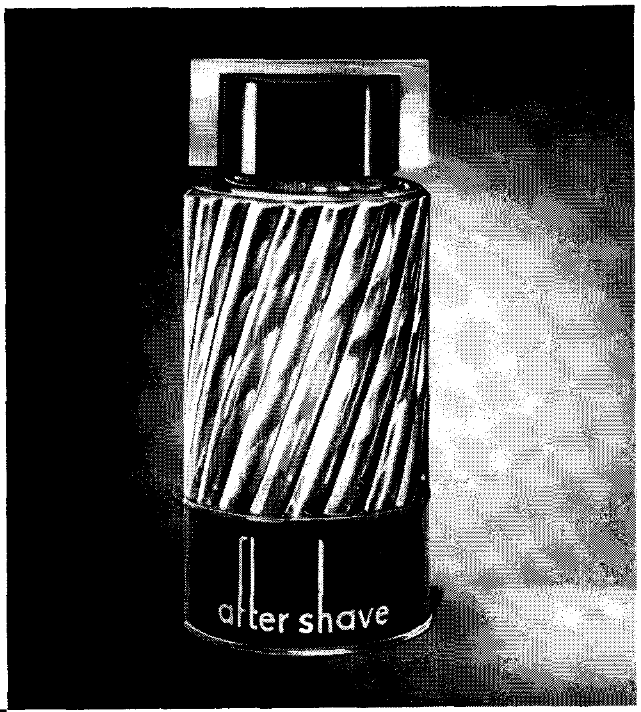
campaign, Hainan was second in importance only to Formosa among the holdings left to the Nationalists. Its defenses were clearly weak. The interior of the island was held by a Red guerrilla movement of many years' standing. The Nationalists held only a thin perimeter, and they held it with inferior troops, under a confused command. Communist regulars obviously had a good chance of crossing the narrow channel between the mainland and Hainan, smashing through the perimeter, and joining the guerrillas. Weeks before the all-out attack on Hainan, the Reds began sending over small advance parties of cheap troops, to keep the Nationalists off balance and to run arms to the guerrillas if they could. Many such parties, as the Reds had expected, were wiped out, and the Nationalists were soon convincing reporters that each repulse was a conclusive victory. In late April, the Reds finally made their big move. For days, the progress of the battle was befogged with uncheckable claims of victory by both sides. Then, on a Thursday, when things were reaching a climax, a Nationalist Army spokesman in Hong Kong took the press aside. "Do you want to make some money?" he asked. "If so, buy up all the firecrackers in town, because we're expecting a decisive victory in a day or two, and by that time the price will be sky-high." On Friday, the Nationalists did indeed hold a celebration, and on Saturday morning the Hong Kong papers ran banner headlines over Nationalist statements that the Reds had been completely, decisively driven off. Later that day, though, the story fell apart, and the Hong Kong Sunday papers, under smaller heads, had to print admissions that it was all a mistake—that the Nationalist stand was hopeless. The reports cabled abroad had run much the same course, and a large number of the world's newspaper readers had been sold out. They are still often sold out, and they can count on being sold out again and again in the future.

THE propaganda style of the Reds is dissimilar in both degree and kind. They use the steam-roller technique. They stay away from wobbly claims of victory when they can (in Korea they have sometimes been fooled), but once they have made a claim they take pains to see that nothing is allowed to belie it. Like Reds elsewhere, they start with beliefs very different from those of the outside world, and they use a very different language in spreading them. Reporters



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in Hong Kong find it harder to see through their news than through the Nationalists'.

The Reds have many voices here to speak for them. The Hong Kong branch of their New China News Agency monitors the Peiping radio output and sells a distillate of the broadcasts to newspapers. The Communists rule the Chinese-language book trade here. They also keep, or at least dominate, two big Hong Kong Chinese papers, the *Ta Kung Pao* and the *Wen Wei Pao*, which in the past had more illustrious reputations, and a higher standing with Chinese readers, than the small Nationalist Party-line sheets here had. Throughout the Japanese war, the *Ta Kung Pao* was the most reputable paper in China—the largest that still had a claim to freedom. Later, when the Chinese intellectual class turned toward Communism, the *Ta Kung Pao* went along. Now it prints editions in two Red mainland cities. The Hong Kong edition closely follows the lead of the New China News Agency, which is officially and undisguisedly Communist. Key staff members of the *Ta Kung Pao* and the *Wen Wei Pao* hold meetings at least once a week with an N.C.N.A. man, who gives them the line. They put it out well, having better writers than the opposition; the Reds have won the intellectuals over so thoroughly that neither the Nationalists nor the Third Force people can put on anything like their show. The Communists' advantage is less than it was a year ago, though, as the purge in China has convinced many refugees that they can't go back and consequently needn't try to keep in Peiping's favor. Some of them have turned their coats, and the *Ta Kung Pao* and the *Wen Wei Pao* have dropped in circulation. But they still have a strong influence, especially on the youth of the city and on the news trade. What they say is likely to spread far.

Besides working actively on Hong Kong, the Reds try to seal it off from China. The Nationalists believed in censorship and press control, too, but they were troubled by world opinion and stopped at half measures; they never really managed to hide things from outsiders or from their own people. The Reds have grasped the nettle firmly. A month ago, Peiping put out an order against giving away state secrets. Many categories of secrets were listed, among them "Hygiene," "Railways," "Postal Service," and "Culture;" the catch-all category at the end consisted of "Other State Affairs That Require to Be Kept Secret." The penalty for giving away

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secrets is trial as a "counter-revolutionary," which often means death after a rigged hearing. All this takes away any rights a Chinese newspaperman in Red China may have had; he must censor himself relentlessly to be safe. Moreover, he can be tried retroactively for something he wrote in, say, the nineteen-thirties; it's believed here that many idealistic reporters and editors who stayed on the mainland in anticipation of the new Red dawn and were deceived have already been put away on this pretext. The Reds have imposed censorship on the mails, opening not all letters but enough to frighten people; it's common now for mainland Chinese to ask their friends abroad to stop writing. A huge number of books have been banned. A patriotic movement to give up short-wave receivers is on. It can be fatal to stay out of this; repair shops in Shanghai are offering to help by taking sets away free. The Reds have made a special effort to stop the exchange of news between Hong Kong and Canton, cities that are close together and whose people are very much alike. Hong Kong papers are banned in Canton; they cannot even be used as wrapping for parcels sent there. New ordinances have cut the flow of travellers from Hong Kong to Canton to about a tenth of what it was a year ago, and those who do go are put through a strict body search. Travellers coming here from the mainland now are shy of talking, especially if they hope to go back or have left families behind. Some news is still smuggled to the bigger Hong Kong papers from the nearest Red territory, but the Reds' efforts to put up a wall are getting more intense. Hong Kong is in some ways a museum of old-style British liberalism, in which freedom of the press is a leading display. The Reds may feel they cannot build a Marxist state with so distracting a sight nearby.

Behind the wall, a press along Soviet lines, as these are vaguely understood in Hong Kong, has been set up. Lenin's and Stalin's writings are prescribed reading for newsmen. Peiping's idea of the role of the press seems very like Moscow's; it should "educate" the people and give them a sense of belonging to the common effort. Production stories are a major ingredient—stories of labor heroes, and Stakhanovite feats in the mines and factories. The production figures, like Russian ones, are hard to check; they are apt to be given in percentages of something not known—say, the figures of the year before. There is no tracing them back to earth. The assault on the West goes along at full throttle. Even the most unlikely sources of fuel are drawn upon. "Agents of U.S. espionage," the N.C.N.A. reported a while ago, "have been sent into Siam in the guise of merchants, according to a Siamese paper quoted by the Singapore Chinese daily *Nan Chiao Jih Pao.*" Perhaps no weaker chain of authority has ever been cited. "Armed with a complete program of aggression," the N.C.N.A. said during the London conference on the Atlantic Pact last year, "the U.S. ruling-bloc agent Acheson arrived in Western Europe to preside over a series of meetings with the intent of imposing this program on the servile countries of the North Atlantic Pact." The trouble is, of course, that many, many Chinese behind the Red wall must believe all this. An American girl I know was absolutely certain when she left Shanghai last summer that the South Koreans had started the Korean war by attacking across the Thirty-eighth Parallel. Two close friends of hers in Tokyo, her first outward stop, had difficulty convincing her she was wrong.

Self-criticism in print, and criticism of the government, within limits, is encouraged on the mainland. A special case of self-criticism has been getting space in the Red press lately. It originated with a movie, "The Story of Wu Hsun," Wu Hsun being a historical figure who solicited money for village schools under the Manchu dynasty. A state-approved movie company in China—there are, naturally, no others—made the film. It was shown in Shanghai, China's biggest city, and got what the capitalist world would call good notices. But Shanghai is hundreds of miles from Peiping, the source of truth. When "The Story of Wu Hsun" reached Peiping's eye, it was found to contain grave errors, the chief one being that its hero compromised with society and accepted the support of "feudalistic elements." It was cracked down on. Since then, those who took part in making it have been criticizing themselves without mercy, and the incident has been designated a topic for Red study groups.

By examining the outpourings of the New China News Agency, one can see that the mainland press is abetted in its propaganda work by many side schemes. Public loudspeaker networks have been installed in some cities for exhortations to the populace. Lunar New Year pictures, an old Chinese art form, have been given new, ideological subjects; "Glory Through Labor" and "Chairman Mao Tse-tung Reviews the Troops" are two of them. There is a

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tremendous state book-publishing plan. (In our time, books—not newspapers or movies—have been the spearhead of the advance of Russian culture into China. This was true even before the Soviet assumed control of Russian culture. Chinese readers take well to Russian novels, perhaps because the social background is more like their own than that of, say, American novels. The leading Chinese writers of this century—Lu Hsun and Mao Tun are two of them—have been greatly influenced by Russian literature.) The picture one gets from Hong Kong is of a vast effort—surely less telling than it sounds, if China is at all as it used to be—to weld the people into one marching column by propaganda. Also, of course, to weld them into a marching column by marching. Immense parades are held on likely days. The people must sit through long "education" meetings. En masse, they must damn Christian leadership and the "imperialists" and praise the "brilliant guidance of the Soviet Union." Crowds are urged out to attend the killings of counter-revolutionaries.

Except for a few nondescript Western Communists and pro-Communists, and an occasional Indian, the only foreign newspapermen on the mainland now are from Russia or Russian satellites. The Western press is in Hong Kong, trying to unravel the rumors and propaganda and trying to keep, or attain, a balanced view. Reporters here find this hard, for various reasons. One is that they have too many words to read. The New York *Times* man reads three local English-language papers a day, plus about sixty long, legal-size, single-spaced pages of mimeographed translations from Chinese papers. He gets six or eight double-spaced pages a day from his translator, who, for his part, reads eight more Chinese papers. He reads several magazines. Every day the *Times* man can tear himself away from all this, he tries to see two or three people, usually travellers from the mainland. They themselves create problems, even when they are willing to talk. China is now so chopped up into regional cells that travellers can speak only for the immediate area they have come from; one cannot draw general conclusions from what they say. A while ago, some well-placed Indian businessmen came through on their way home from Peiping. They said flatly, and on what they thought was good authority, that there weren't any purges in China, although countless reports from travellers and reams of Peiping's own propaganda have made it clear that there are

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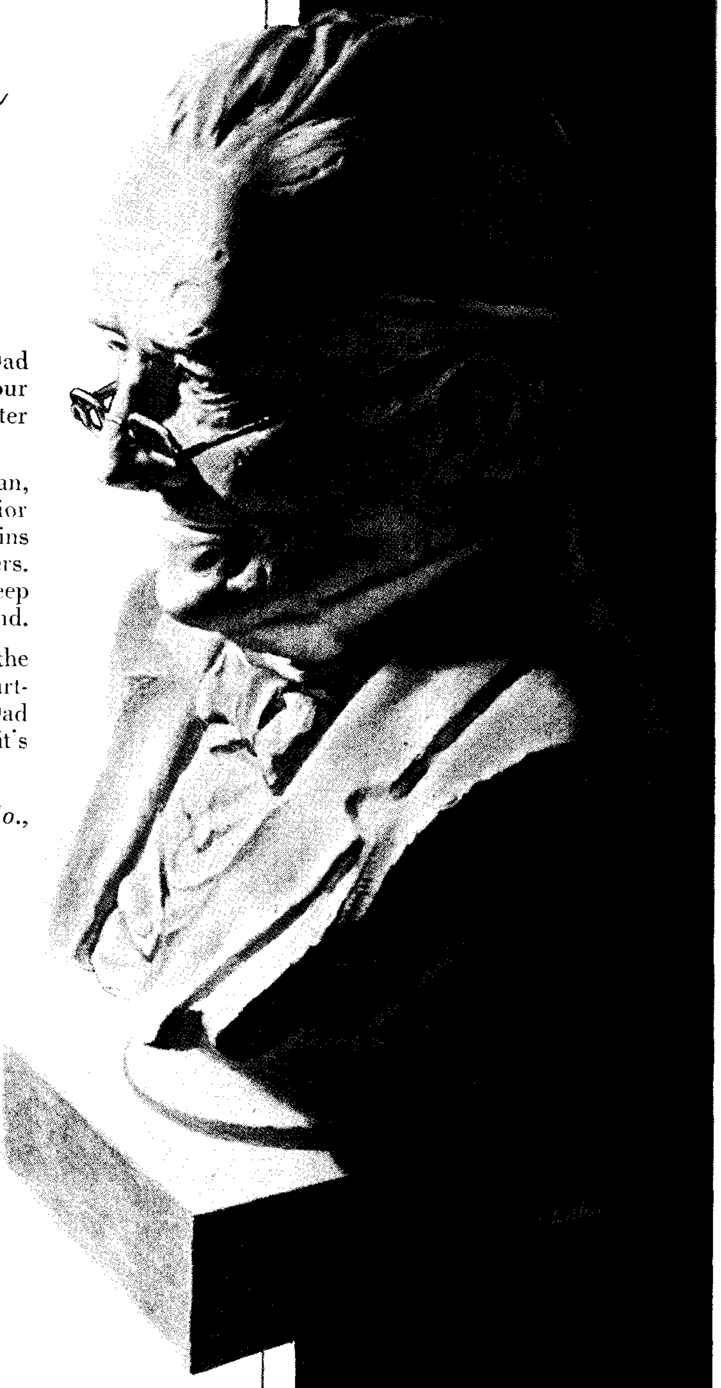

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purges—and that some were going on while the Indians were there.

Red China went in hard for the Stockholm Peace Appeal. The drive started with a call from the herd-riding outfits of the various sections of the populace—the All-China Federation of Labor, the All-China Democratic Women's Federation, the All-China Democratic Youth Federation, and so on. Party workers hurried to their stations. No part of China escaped. In Inner Mongolia, the nomadic steppe country north of the Great Wall, the Mongol Communist Chairman Ulanfu was the first to sign. In Urumchi, in remote Chinese Turkistan, a peace play about American imperialism was staged. In a train heading for Tsitsihar, in north Manchuria, a call for signatures was made over the public-address system, and the train crew went around collecting them.

One member of the talent leading the drive was Mei Lan-fang, the great actor, who thereby proved his versatility and durability; he had previously led propaganda drives for both the Nationalists and the Japanese puppets. A poet, Ai Ching, turned in two works, one blessing the Peace Appeal, the other cursing Acheson as a warmonger. Kuo Mo-jo, one of China's leading scholars, contributed a satire on President Truman. Indeed, Kuo Mo-jo, who was extremely active in the campaign, chanced to underline what was, for an outsider, its great irony. Kuo, an anthropologist, historian, and critic, is perhaps the most prominent Chinese intellectual today. He was a Third Force Chinese—non-Communist and anti-Chiang—during most of the civil war. When he finally went to Peiping, as the center of Chinese culture, he was made a vice-chairman of the new government. After that, in numberless speeches, he put out the Communist line with unmatched fervor. There has never been a sign from Kuo or the other campaigners that they have noticed the inconsistencies and contradictions, so striking to Western eyes, in their position.

ONE of the Reds' main tasks in China now is to discredit the Catholic missions, which made huge inroads there in the past century and won a standing that the new ideology can hardly abide. The attacks on the Church are carried out in various ways, but no campaign is fiercer than the one centering on the nuns' work with Chinese babies, which burst into full flame on the Red International Children's Day, last June 1st. Chinese peasants and coolies

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are so poor that they often must abandon sickly babies, or girl babies of whatever state of health. There used to be towers near some Chinese cities where these children could be left to die. Decades ago, the Catholics began opening orphanages in China to take in the foundlings—taking in even hopeless cases by the thousand, out of compassion and out of religious conviction. Many of the babies, of course, died, and the Reds have now started to dig up the graveyards, blaming the nuns for what they find and getting the neighbors in to bring charges. At the Sacred Heart Orphanage in Nanking, according to the New China News Agency, three hundred and seventy-two children died out of five hundred and fifty-seven who entered it between January, 1948, and June, 1950. Over a hundred and twenty bodies were dug from the kitchen garden, the N.C.N.A. said, and "there was evidence that some had not been dead when buried." Seven sisters from that orphanage were tried for "neglect and wanton maltreatment;" two got sentences of ten years, and the rest were deported. At an orphanage near Hankow, in central China, the N.C.N.A. claimed on June 1st, sixteen thousand children had been received in twenty-three years, and only a hundred and three were still alive. The figures were later changed to forty thousand received and a hundred and twenty-six left alive. With time, the Chinese term "*sha-hai*" ("murder") has been used more and more freely in Red attacks on the nuns. In late June, a Mrs. Fan rose at a Shanghai meeting and said the orphanage in Wuhu, another Chinese city, was "nothing but a slaughterhouse." This ogrelike portrait of the Catholic sisters, surely among the meekest and kindliest people ever to have walked the earth, must be fast gaining acceptance in China, where superstition and anti-foreignism make for ready belief. The East and the West have never come very near to understanding each other. Now, here in Hong Kong, the last meeting place, it seems they must drift farther and farther apart before there is a turning. The Big Lie is between them now, and it is growing bigger.

—CHRISTOPHER RAND

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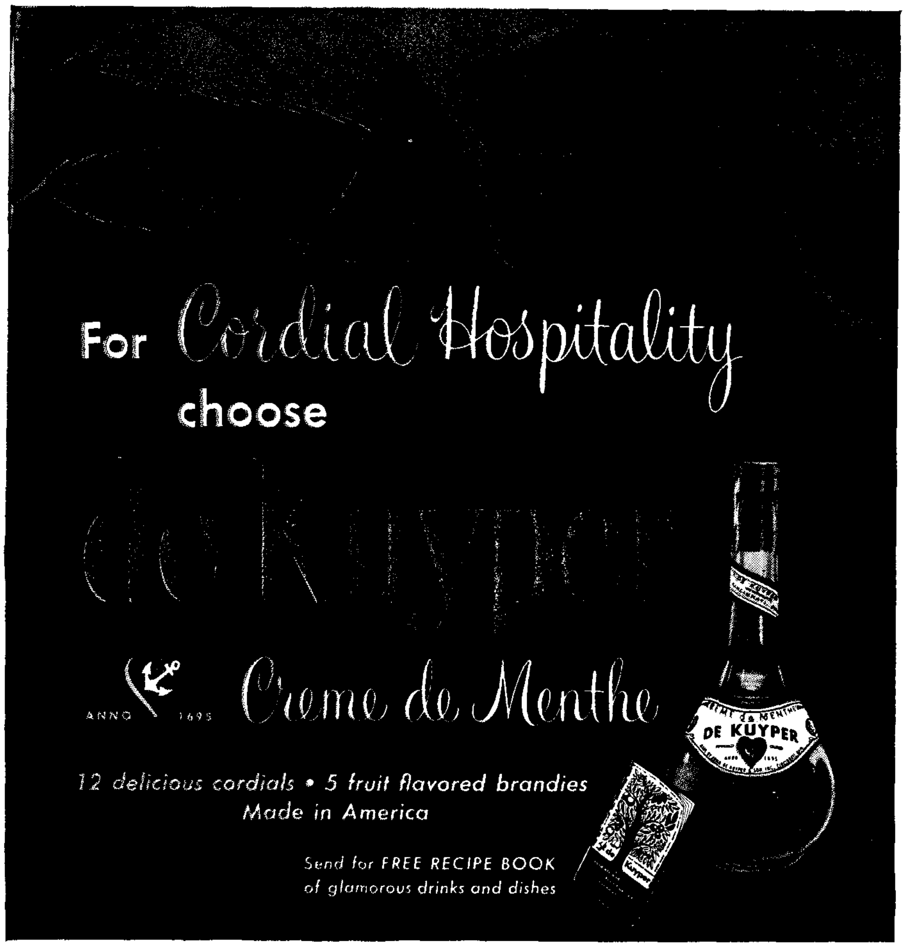
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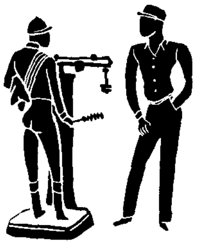
THE RACE TRACK

One Alerted, One Relaxed



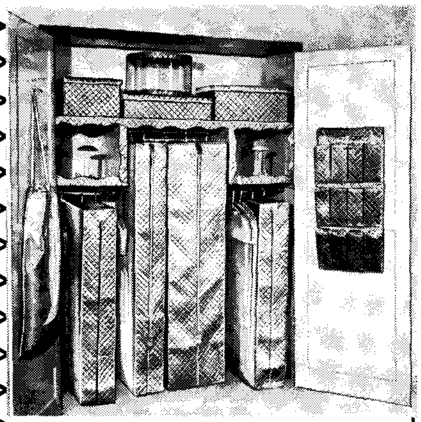
THERE really isn't much to be said about the Discovery Handicap at Aqueduct last week-end except that Alerted led all the way. A great deal can be said about the runners, however, for they were the best three-year-olds seen together in some time. I suppose you could call the victory of Alerted—he is a nimble, hard-working Calumet Farm castoff who was sold to the Hampton Stable, his present owner, about a year ago—a triumph of persistency. As you may remember, Alerted ran second to Battlefield in both the Shevlin and the Dwyer Stakes at Aqueduct during the summer meeting, but in the Discovery, as you surely know by now, Battlefield was the one who finished second. All the same, I still think Battlefield is the best of his age. It can't be denied that he gives you a run for your money. I must say I was surprised that Arcaro, who rode him, didn't use his whip in the stretch, as he usually does. Taking stock of the lot before the race, Hirsch Jacobs remarked that Battlefield looked fit and what he liked particularly was that the colt yawned frequently. "That's a sign he's a good horse," said Jacobs. "Shows he's relaxed. Stymie used to yawn all the time before a race. So did Palestinian." He added that whenever he inspects a draft of yearlings or two-year-olds, he keeps his eyes peeled for yawners. If you've ever wondered how Jacobs picks his horses, this may clear things up a bit.

Uncle Miltie let his friends down badly again. His coat shone and he appeared to be on his toes, but he started slowly, lagged lengths behind his field for half a mile (some watchers blamed his rider for this), and, when he finally got going, merely passed a few tired horses. Another disappointment was Battle Morn, whose long rest doesn't seem to have done him any good worth mentioning. That's the way it goes. Still, there's that pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Alerted cost $10,000, and has earned $76,635 this season.

IT isn't often that a hundred-to-one shot wins a stakes race. Well, it happened at Aqueduct the other afternoon in the Astarita, for two-year-old fillies. Actually, Place Card, who won the Astarita, paid better than a hundred to one—$246.60 in the two-dollar mutuels. You might have expected such odds against a first-time starter or an unknown from the hinterland, but Place Card had run rather well recently (she finished fourth the last time out), and there was even a lukewarm tip on her. Anyone who gave her more than a casual glance probably decided that she wouldn't do for a number of reasons, and dashed off to buy tickets on Star-Enfin or Rose Jet. Just for that, Place Card popped out of the pack midway down the stretch and beat Landmark by half a length. Rose Jet was third. When the payoff was posted, joyous cries here and there showed that quite a few people had bet on Place Card. A man standing near me shouted that he had a ten-dollar ticket on that one. "Show me," said his glum companion. "I always wanted to see one of them things." If anyone except the Collector of Internal Revenue cares, one hundred-dollar ticket on Place Card was sold. The holder collected $12,330.

I WASN'T as impressed by Moonrush, who made his first Eastern appearance early last week in the Aqueduct Handicap, as I suppose I should have been. To be sure, he won the Santa Anita Handicap last March, and other purses in California—altogether a couple of hundred thousand dollars—but I can't believe he's a top horse. And I'm not judging him solely on his performance in the Aqueduct Handicap, in which he was second to Bryan G., for he was running over a course that was strange to him. He's used to the hard tracks of Santa Anita and Hollywood Park, and it's going to take him time to get accustomed to the softer footing here. I guess this is the wrong thing to say, but Moonrush looks like a trotter to me. Don't misunderstand me—this is not written in derogation; as great a horse as I ever saw was a trotter, named Greyhound. It does seem to me, though, that a runner ought to *look* like a runner.

AS far as I'm concerned, the best way to explain Cousin's scoring in the Hopeful Stakes, which wound up Saratoga's very successful meeting, is to say that the best horse won as the race was run. Nobody's complaining, mind you, but I fancy that Tom Fool would have run better if the track had been fast, which it wasn't. Be that as it may, Cous-



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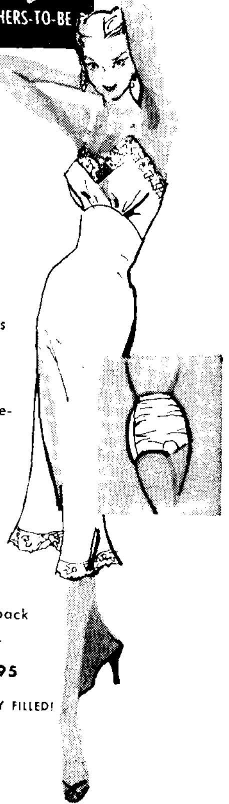

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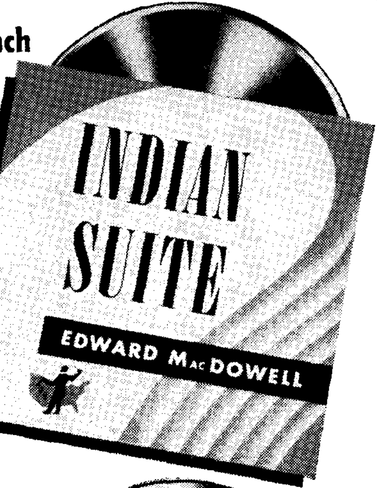

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in is at the head of the class, for he has won the Flash, at five and a half furlongs; the Saratoga Special, at six furlongs; and the Hopeful, at six and a half furlongs. As it happens, while many good two-year-olds have run at the Spa, none has ever made a clean sweep of the stakes for his age. Jamestown came closest to it, if memory serves. In 1930, he took the Flash, the United States Hotel Stakes, the Saratoga Special, and the Grand Union Hotel Stakes, but he finished second in the Hopeful to a colt named Epithet, by Epinard. Jamestown carried a hundred and thirty pounds and Epithet a hundred and seventeen. There were horses you could bet on in those days.

OF considerably less interest was the Washington Park Futurity in Chicago, in which Oh Leo beat Hill Gail and thirteen others pretty easily. You needn't drag the bunting out of the attic because of that, though, for a roving outside man assures me that Hill Gail is no great shakes. In fact, my man says none of the two-year-olds out there is anything to get yourself exercised about except A Gleam; she's something extra.

—AUDAX MINOR

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ANTICLIMAX DEPARTMENT

[*From the Post*]

The New York State American Legion says death should be the penalty for "teaching and advocating overthrow of the government."

The recommendation was in one of a series of anti-Communist resolutions adopted yesterday at the Legion's convention at Manhattan Center.

The Legion also urged all trade with Russia and its satellites be suspended, and that U.S. financial aid to countries trading with Communist nations be halted.

The Legion also demanded that bingo be legalized if conducted by religious, fraternal or non-profit organizations.

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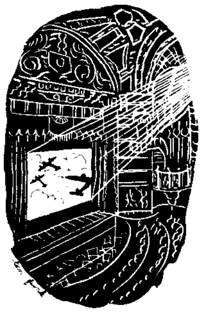
THE CURRENT CINEMA

Bengal Without Lancers



THERE is currently available for your entertainment a picture, in color, called "The River," which deals with Anglo-Indian life along the banks of the Ganges. About fifteen years ago, Pare Lorentz adorned a paean to the Mississippi with the same title, but this film's approach to an inland waterway and its environs is quite different from that of its titular predecessor. Here there is no sticking to a documentary method, however lyrical, as there was in Mr. Lorentz's work. Instead, the Ganges goes its sacred way as a kind of profound background for a tale that sets forth the adolescent torments of a trio of girls who find themselves simultaneously in love with a morose, handsome, one-legged veteran of the last war. As directed by Jean Renoir—he also collaborated on the screenplay with Rumer Godden, author of the novel from which the whole thing stems—and produced by Kenneth McEldowney, a former Hollywood florist, so help me, "The River" is leisurely about introducing its characters. Once it has established the various idiosyncrasies of the people it intends to dwell on, though, it gets down to some subtle, exciting, enlightening drama. Possibly because Bengal, where "The River" was photographed, is somewhat remote from the brazen world that our home-grown celluloid juveniles inhabit, the young ladies who figure most prominently in this picture behave like human beings and are far too complicated emotionally to waste time worrying over their chances of becoming queens of a wienie-roast or the hayride companions of toothy pubescents. One of our heroines is a fourteen-year-old English lass, hovering nervously between the security of childhood and the adventure of maturity; the second is a slightly older Anglo-Indian, whose heritage leaves her swaying uncertainly between the East and the West; and the last is an ardent English miss of eighteen, unsettled by the fact that she just wants to be in love—with whom, it doesn't matter much.

To unravel the romantic difficulties of these girls would tax the abilities of a good many directors; Renoir not only handles the job expertly but assumes the additional task of describing the folk customs of Bengal, which are a good bit livelier than you might imagine. Whatever its other merits, the Hindu religion, as Renoir presents it, has moments of uproar that make an old-fashioned Fourth of July appear as placid as a Quaker meeting, and certainly when the Indians decide on a musical blowout, they wrap it up as solidly as the residents of Beale Street used to. The fact that Renoir has employed his camera with extraordinary skill will hardly come as any surprise, and if the color doesn't always stay exactly in register, we can probably ascribe that drawback to technical difficulties beyond his control.

Of the cast of "The River," only Arthur Shields and Nora Swinburne were very familiar to me, and both of them are superb, one as the father of the Anglo-Indian girl, the other as the mother of the fourteen-year-old. Outstanding among the rest of the cast is Radha, who plays Mr. Shields' daughter. Along with her acting accomplishments, Radha is celebrated in India for her dancing, and she gives an excellent example of her art in a charming fable inserted in the film as a kind of bonus none of us really has any right to expect.

—JOHN McCARTEN

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NOTICE—Mrs. Freda May Smith, 28 years old, June 30, with three children, wants a man that likes kids, 25 or 30, prefer widower, with a country home. See at 619 north 13th street, in Terre Haute. —*Adv. in the Spencer (Ind.) Evening World.*

That's a lot of kids.

•

"I hope the impression is not going to be left that the firemen are a bunch of alcoholics," Reginald Swanborough, president of the Firefighters' Local, said. "The percentage in the fire department is no greater than any other group of 300 men. We have 102 chronic cases."—*Toronto Telegram.*

Well-l-l, that sounds a little high.

•

SHOUTS WE DOUBT EVER GOT SHOUTED

[*From "The Age of Elegance," by Arthur Bryant*]

Two hundred fell, but, before the enemy could recover, they were swarming up the ladders, the men of the 3rd Division crying out to their old rivals: "Stand out of the way!" to which the latter, shoving fiercely by, shouted back, "Damn your eyes, do you think we Light Division fetch ladders for such chaps as you to climb up!"

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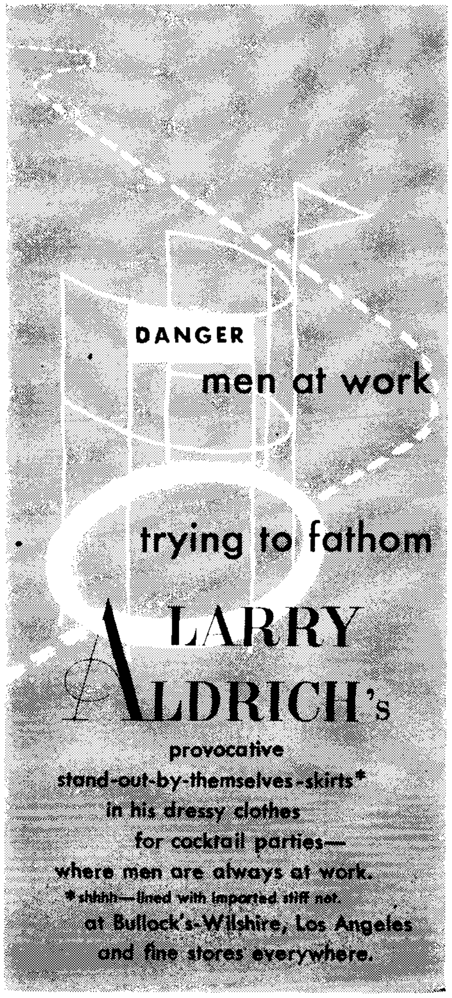
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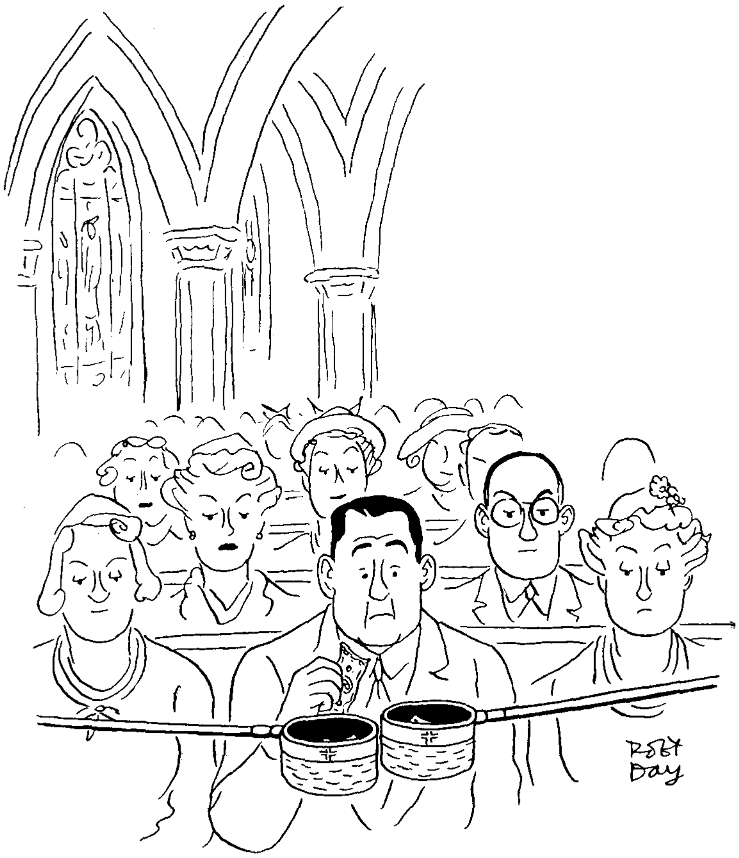
BOOKS

An English Critic on the French Novel—Gertrude Stein as a Young Woman

"THE NOVEL IN FRANCE," by Martin Turnell (New Directions), is a little disappointing if one had been reading with special pleasure the sections of it that had been appearing in various magazines, but it is still a distinguished book. It continues the line of inquiry of Mr. Turnell's earlier book, "The Classical Moment," which contained critical essays on Corneille, Molière, and Racine. In his new book, Mr. Turnell pursues the development of the French tradition of the seventeenth-century dramatists through the novels of Mme. de La Fayette, Choderlos de Laclos, Benjamin Constant, Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, and Proust.

Mr. Turnell has a keener taste than is usual with English critics for the seventeenth-century French poets and "moralists" (those composers of aphorisms and "characters"), who analyze motives, as it were, in a void, or at least on the assumption that the society they deal with is eternal and universal, and he writes about them and their successors in fiction with the liveliest appreciation but from a foreigner's point of view, so that you get something quite fresh and quite different from the ritual gestures with which French critics are in the habit of handling their classics. These books of Mr. Turnell's would make, for an English-speaking reader, a better introduction to all this department of French literature than a conventional academic French history. In French poetry and prose alike, a good many of the effects are invisible to Anglo-Saxon readers not accustomed to the methods of French literature, and Mr. Turnell is especially good at explaining the nuances of vocabulary, the implications of images, and the changes of tone and pace that have been managed in the classical French language, formal, restrained, and abstract, but that may escape one whose sensibility has been formed by reaction to the stimuli of either the concrete detail or the riotous imagery of English.



Mr. Turnell does not share, however, the conviction of Louis XIV's Great Century that the workings of the "human heart" and the art that attempts to describe them have not changed and cannot change. He shows how the shifting conceptions of man in relation to society and nature are reflected in the style and vocabulary as well as in the characters and situations of French novelists, from the Racinian Mme. de La Fayette to the symbolist-impressionist Marcel Proust, and this is really the subject of his book. His way of presenting his discoveries is by the fashionable *explication de texte*. Mr. Turnell is well equipped for this: he possesses a special gift for pinning down the expression of a feeling, the insinuation of a point of view, in a phrase or the arrangement of a sentence. But he includes so many long quotations and analyzes them so minutely that eventually he rather fatigues us. There are moments when he risks our confusing him with one of those professional commentators who mistake for the profoundest criticism the laborious annotation of a schoolroom text. And occasionally, it seems to me, he misses. I am not sure that he does not find too much subtlety in the conventional and, to me, rather insipid images of Benjamin Constant, and he certainly fails to see the point when he objects to a description by Flaubert of the dull and meaningless clutter of a suburban approach to Paris that the words, "like lumps of lead," fall meaninglessly on the page, which is just what they ought to do. But, as a rule, his close exegesis illumines with the lights of sympathy and of a finely trained sense of style.

With Flaubert, Mr. Turnell is in general less successful than with any of his other subjects, for Flaubert does not really belong to the tradition that interests the critic. Flaubert is a satirist and poet but not very much of a psychologist. Mr. Turnell is good on Proust, who, besides doing so much else, absorbing and stamping with his own special accent so many other aspects of literature, revived the "moral" reflections of the seventeenth-century writers (Mr. Turnell has an excellent discussion of the meaning of the French word *moral*). But, finding that Flaubert does not study human behavior as searchingly as Stendhal (Mr. Turnell's favorite), for example, it does not mean much to him that Flaubert is, aside from his technical accomplishment, important as a critic of society. And able though "The Novel in France" is, agreeable though it is to read, it seems to suffer a trifle from a process that has set in in England and that is even more noticeable now than it was at the time of the war: a kind of shrinking in on itself of the English literary mind, an avoidance of cultural issues of international scope, a self-isolation from current history. The English writers on literature at the present time seem to feel least uncomfortable either in turning out little articles that neatly and not too excitingly will just fill a page in a weekly or in writing not too heavy books on safe, slightly faded figures of the eighteenth or nineteenth century (books that themselves supply subjects for a good many of the weekly articles). The project of the unfortunate hero of Cyril Connolly's novel "The Rock Pool" to do a nice little biography of Samuel Rogers is the ideal example of this. It is all to Mr. Turnell's credit that he has tackled something more ambitious—and produced something a great deal more interesting—than most of his British colleagues; but he, too, is confined in a rock pool that has been left by the ebb of the tide. He, too, appears on a landscape where the moderate stature of Lytton Strachey rises to impressive height and where it still throws a long shadow.

THE Banyan Press of Pawlet, Vermont, has published, in an edition of five hundred and sixteen copies, a very early manuscript of Gertrude Stein's: a short novel, to which the author had given the title "Quod Erat Demonstrandum" but which has been retitled by the editor, making use of a phrase from the story, "Things As They Are." The manuscript is dated October 24, 1903, when the author was twenty-nine, and it must have been written before "Three Lives," the first of her published books, which came out in 1909. Like "Three Lives," it is quite comprehensible, and it does not even show any tendency toward the Steinian repetitiousness that already appears in "Three Lives." It is a production of some literary merit and of much psychological interest. The reviewer had occasion some years ago to go through Miss Stein's work chronologically, and he came to the conclusion at that time that the vagueness that began to blur it from about 1910 on and the masking by unexplained metaphors that later made it seem opaque, though partly the result of an effort to emulate modern painting, were partly also due to a need imposed by the problem of writing about relationships between women of a kind that the standards of that era would not have allowed her to describe more explicitly. It seemed obvious that her queer little portraits and stories and her mischievously baffling prose poems did often deal with subjects of this sort. Now the publication of "Things As They Are" comes to confirm this theory. It is a story of the tangled relations of three Lesbian American girls of the early nineteen-hundreds, told with complete candor and an astonishing lack of self-consciousness.

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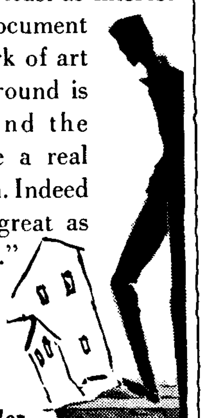

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tories of Havelock Ellis that, published in his "Studies in the Psychology of Sex" between 1897 and 1910, did a good deal to clear the air. In this document of Gertrude Stein's there is nothing in the least scandalous (unless the subject itself be considered so), and the whole thing is done with a sobriety, even an abstractness of language, that recalls one of those French classical novels—"La Princesse de Clèves" or "Adolphe"—that Mr. Turnell so much admires. (The author's geometrical title was, in fact, so perfectly appropriate that one wonders why the editor should have changed it.) Yet this study has behind it something of the modern scientific temper and brings us back to the brilliant young woman who, at Radcliffe, took psychology with William James and was called by him his best woman pupil, and who had, though she did not graduate, five years of medical school at Johns Hopkins.

Gertrude Stein went to Europe in 1902, after she had dropped her medical work, and the heroine of "Things As They Are," a college graduate named Adele, is first seen on a ship bound for Europe. She has given herself up in her steamer chair "to a sense of physical weariness and to the disillusionship of recent failures" when she is approached by a handsome girl, well-to-do and college-bred like herself, whose obvious interest in her has the result of suddenly awakening her from a "long emotional apathy." The girl, whose name is Helen, tactfully pays her court, and Adele, though with a certain passivity, more or less responds to her attentions.

But Helen has another friend, Sophie, an intimate of long standing, who is also a friend of Adele's and who later explains to Adele, when they are back in the United States, the nature of her (Sophie's) relations with Helen. Adele is at first filled with horror but, goaded by Helen's challenge, eventually herself succumbs. This gives rise to something in the nature of the heterosexual *ménage à trois*, but with differences that come out distinctly in the report of an observant woman who is not much disturbed by emotion. The homogeneity of sex seems in some ways a stabilizing influence, yet the intrusion of a masculine element on the part of the women themselves and the difficulty they have in keeping it up are uncertain and upsetting factors. Adele will assert of Sophie that "it was not that she had the manners of a perfect hostess but the more obtrusive good manners of a gentleman," and will try to tell herself

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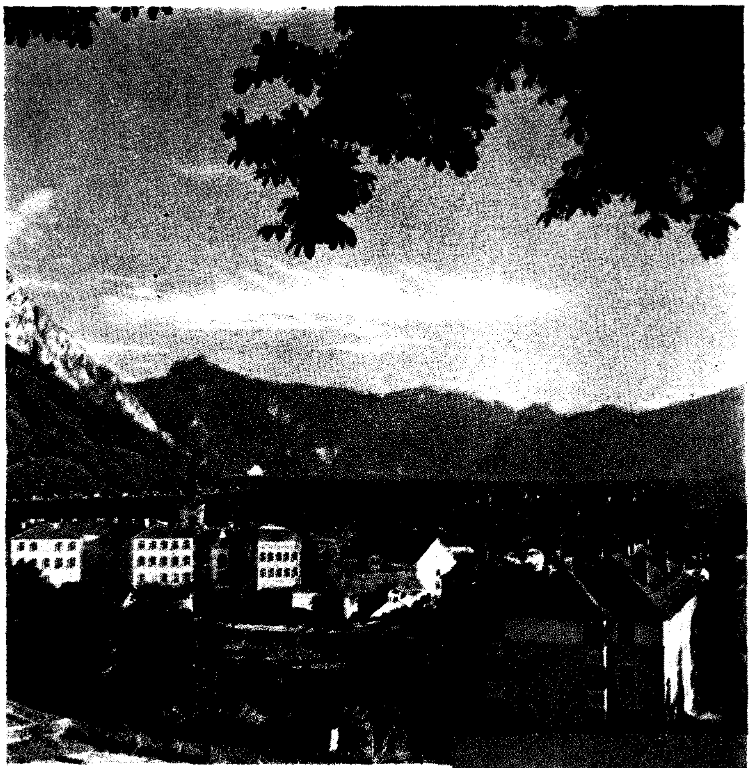

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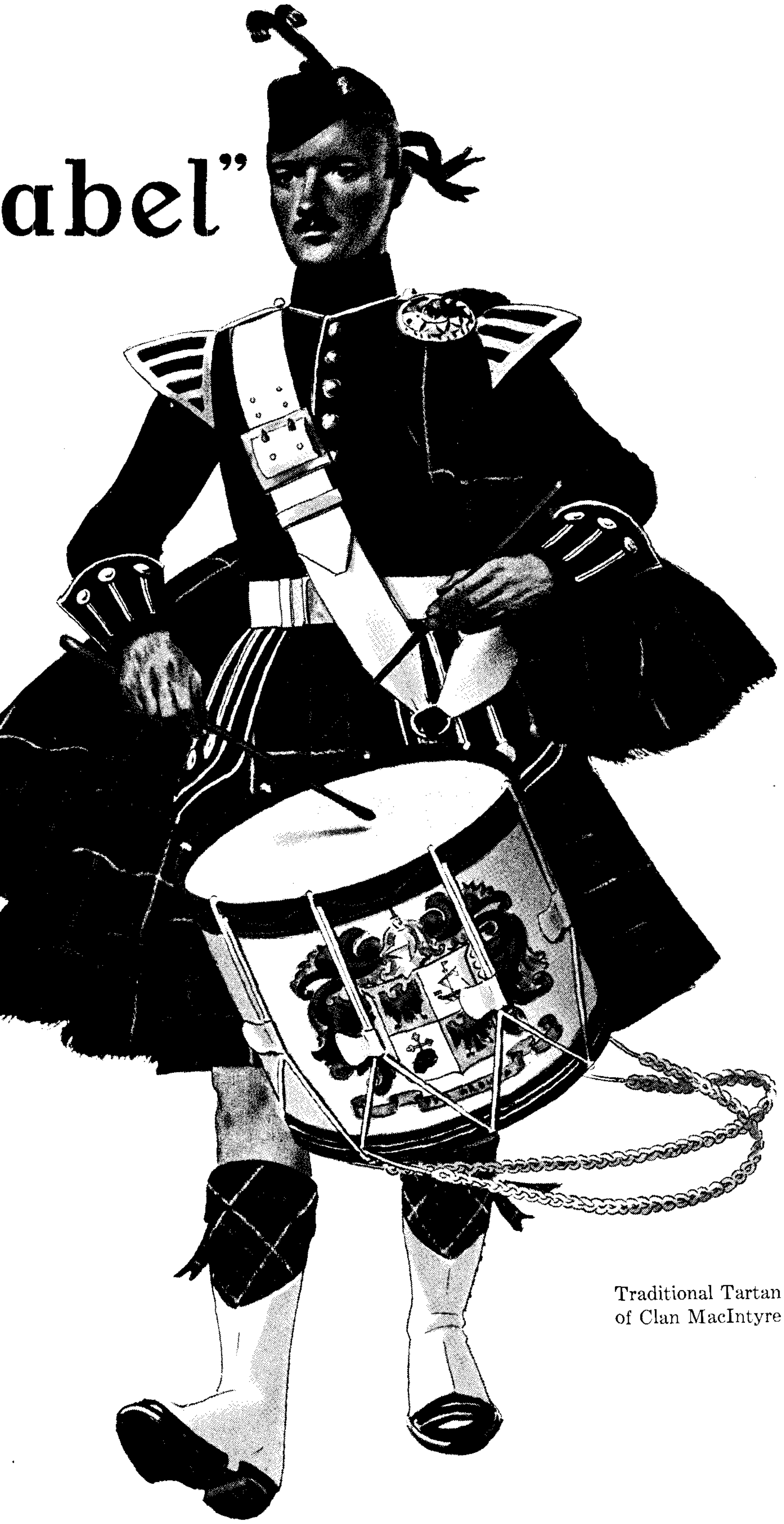

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that, in her attitude toward the trusting and deceived Sophie, she has not behaved like "a cad," but at other moments strained relations collapse into feminine cattiness and lead to bitter altercations that seem almost to reach the hair-pulling stage. This inevitably becomes faintly comic, as if one were witnessing a triangle between three mislaid empty gloves, all intended for the left hand, and one cannot be sure that Gertrude Stein is not already treating the situation with irony. One does feel some personal animus on the part of the author toward Sophie, and the triangle results in an impasse that is painful for all three of the ladies—since Helen, of whom her family disapprove and who is kept by them on short rations, is obliged to do her travelling at Sophie's expense (Europe is a necessity for all of them), and Adele, realizing at last that she cannot break up the pair, finds it too much for her pride always to be following Helen and stealing moments from her intimacy with Sophie. Yet the smiling, detached Gertrude Stein is already emerging in "Things As They Are" from the perplexities and the trying adjustments of the young woman intellectual who insists that she is loyal to the middle-class virtues. You are reminded in certain passages of the comedy of Miss Furr and Miss Skeene, that touching pair of left-hand gloves who are the heroines of another story.

This later detachment of Gertrude Stein's is seen in its beginnings in "Things As They Are," not only in the author's tone but also in the character of Adele. Adele is self-centered and rather inert; she does not readily give herself; she likes to be alone and ruminate, to feel that she is "her own man." Helen and Sophie, with their passions and reproaches, stimulate but also annoy her; her involvement with them hampers her movements. "Much as I wanted you," she says to Helen, "I was not eager [to see you again] for after all you meant to me a turgid and complex world, difficult yet necessary to understand, and for the moment I wanted to escape all that, I longed only for obvious, superficial, clean simplicity." Her impulse, when she is faced with a problem, is not to see it through, for which Helen sometimes scolds her, but simply to drop it and go away and turn her attention to something else—as the young Gertrude Stein had declined to take William James's examination, explaining that she was very sorry but did not feel like an examination that morning. James gave her an A just the same, but she fared much worse at Johns

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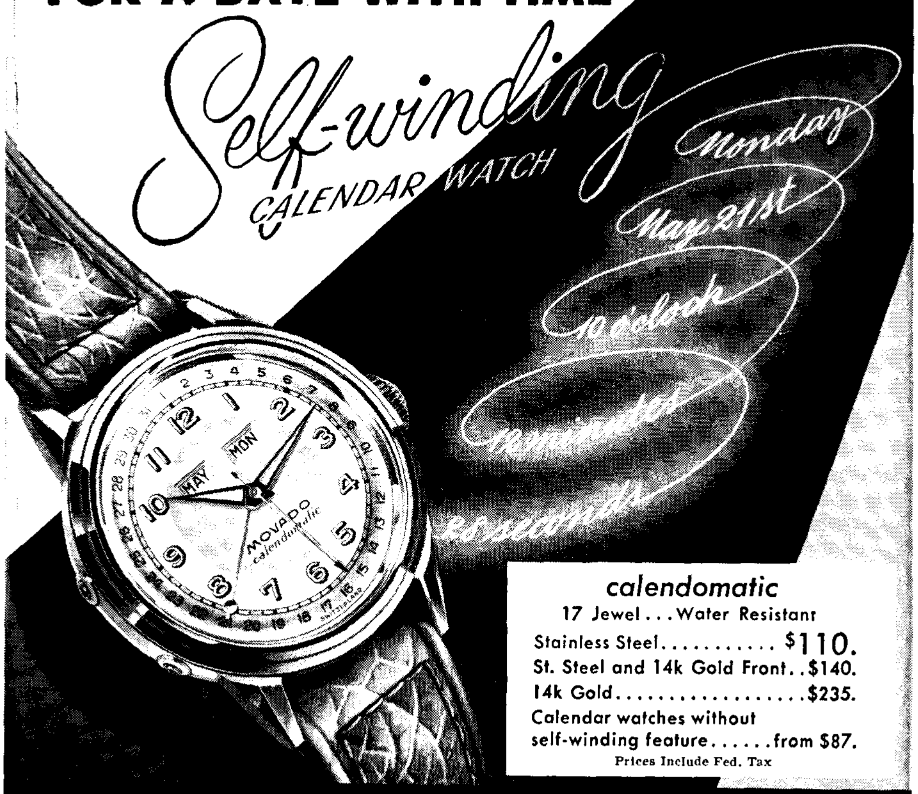

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Hopkins, where her peculiar insouciance had to contend with hostile instructors who had not been convinced, in that era, that women ought to study medicine. One feels, in "Things As They Are," that Adele might have bucked Sophie if she had not so determinedly insisted on deserting the "strapped" Helen and going abroad again by herself. The mature Gertrude Stein later on—in her literary personality—went up on a high mountain, where she could dwell, when she chose, in a cloud. The already well-marked egoism of her heroine Adele is brought out by the comments of Adele's companions. It had grown, by the time of "Three Lives," to that of the august Miss Mathilda, about whom revolve like satellites the three respectful maids, the Good Anna, Melanctha, and the Gentle Lena, who give their names to the stories, and it had swollen to monstrous proportions by the time of "The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas," in which Miss Mathilda of Bridgepoint becomes frankly Miss Stein of Paris, an Olympian known only remotely through the impressions of an admiring high priestess.

The frustration of the young Adele, at the end of "Things As They Are," is a matter, one feels, less of tragic loss than of failure at domination. Gertrude Stein, in her subsequent career, did partially succeed in dominating, through her salon, her collection, her wide reputation, her influence on certain writers; and insofar as she failed to carry off her pretentious claims, she seems to have concealed this—to add a third suggestion to the two I have already made to explain her later impenetrability—by putting herself, once for all, out of the reach of uncomfortable criticism. This reviewer met Miss Stein only once, but he received in the course of that interview an agreeable first impression of a quick and original intelligence dealing readily from the surface of the mind with the surfaces presented by life—the responses so direct and natural, the surfaces seen so unconventionally, that one did not at first feel anything wrong—but a chilling second impression of (to resort to an overworked metaphor) a great iceberg of megalomania that lay beneath this surface and on which, if one did not skirt around it, conversations and personal relations might easily crash and be wrecked. This iceberg—heavy and hard as the stone that her name brings to mind—must have been forming in an emotional solitude, and it now held her two-thirds submerged. I doubt whether the obscurity that hid it—the function of which seems to me quite different from

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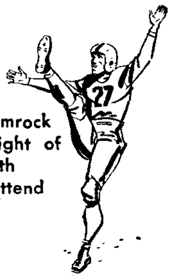

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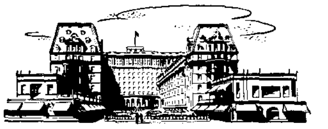

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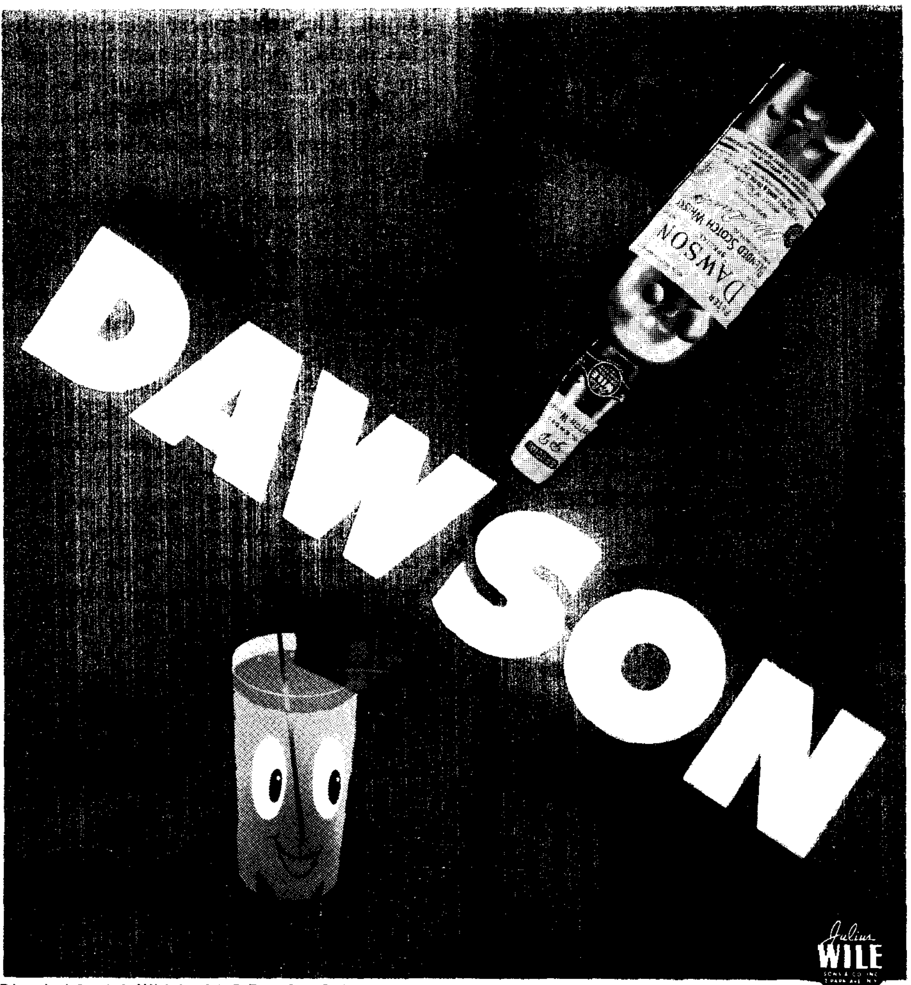
that of Joyce or Virginia Woolf—will interest future readers as much as the limpidity of "Things As They Are."

In any case, we must not leave "Things As They Are" without a glance at the attractive figure of the young independent girl in the costume of 1900, "the cut of whose shirt-waist alone betrayed her American origin" and of whom her friends, meeting her in Rome, exclaimed that she "looked as brown and white and clean as if [she] had just sprung out of the sea;" who liked to sit "in the court of the Alhambra watching the swallows fly in and out of the crevices of the walls, bathing in the soft air filled with the fragrance of myrtle and oleander and letting the hot sun burn her face and the palms of her hands" and who enjoyed making friends with a young Spanish girl whose language she could not speak and from whom she parted "as quiet friends part," turning again and again and "signing a gentle farewell" as long as they could see one another; who came back to "the white snow line of New York harbor," from the damp of a London winter, delighted to see the American flag, "the clean sky and the white snow and the straight plain ungainly buildings all in a cold and brilliant air without spot or stain," and who wandered for days about the Boston streets, "rejoicing in the passionless intelligence of the faces." She would be able, she must already have begun to feel, eventually to do without passion. —EDMUND WILSON

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

THE STRANGE CHILDREN, by Caroline Gordon (Scribner). A novel of conversations—long, highly personal conversations of reminiscence and gossip, talked out against a warm, smoldering Southern background. The background is attractive, and the people, all of them fairly young, are very attractive, although their relationships, even among the married, remain unclear and watery to the end. Lucy Lewis, a spoiled girl of nine, is our conductor through the story. Her parents have a few friends staying in the house, and Lucy, being something of a pest, hangs around listening to the grown-up talk and making interpretations that are more stupid than childlike. Among those present are a convert to Catholicism, his fey wife, who will probably be quite mad before she dies, and a successful magazine man called Tubby. Eventually, the fey wife and Tubby



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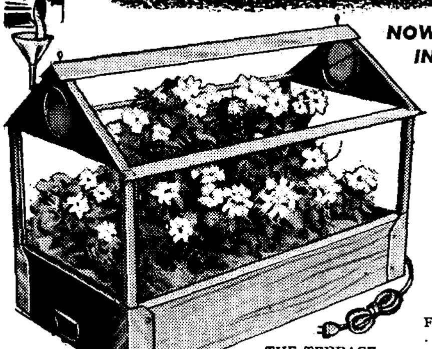

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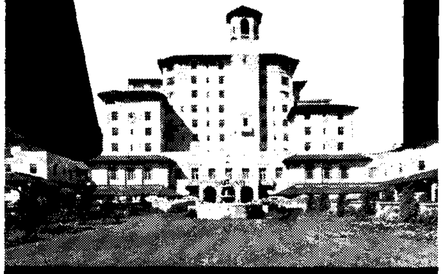

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elope. The atmosphere is consistently fascinating, but one cannot help feeling that if little Lucy could be got out of the room, all the grownups would breathe easier and speak more freely.

THE GLITTERING SHORES, by Catherine Hubbell (Norton). The story of the marriage of Helen and Philip Miles, a young New York couple whose fate is not very interesting, Helen being a truly cold and flat-natured woman, and Philip, though a nice enough man, being weak because of what becomes an excess of bewilderment and good nature. They have a son, David, and a crowd of business friends, whose doings occupy a fair share of the story. Miss Hubbell writes with honesty and understanding, but the surface of her work is blurred, as though she feared that a clearer finish might oblige her to bring her characters into sharp focus, instead of keeping them, as she does now, a convenient, dreamy distance away from herself and from the reader.

TRUTH IN THE NIGHT, by Michael McLaverty (Macmillan). A bare, sad story of some Irish country people, their sins, omissions, and punishments. Vera, a young widow who wills herself into a second marriage, is the kind of discontented, bad-tempered woman no one can tolerate for long, and her husband, Martin, an unexcitable farmer, behaves as grudgingly as any man might who has allowed himself to be persuaded into a marriage he only half wants. Mr. McLaverty's account of all this is so lugubrious that the several deaths at the end come as an anticlimax, the graves of these people seeming hardly more joyless than their homes.

THE DESERT OF LOVE, by François Mauriac, translated by Gerard Hopkins (Pellegrini & Cudahy). A reprint of a novel first published here in 1929. M. Mauriac has created a woman, Maria Cross, who is all things to all men but, unfortunately, nothing to the reader. To Raymond, a seventeen-year-old student, Maria is a loose, dishonest woman of the world, alluring and unattainable. To his father, a hard-worked Bordeaux doctor, she is the ideal companion and lover. She rejects them both, and has a lifelong influence on both, but it seems plain that her influence owes more to the force of their imaginations than to the strength of her personality. The only conclusion to be drawn from this inconclusive but

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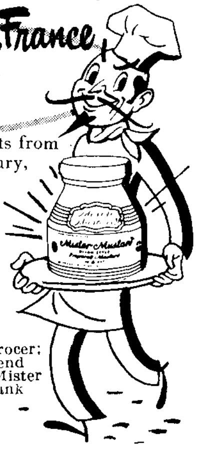

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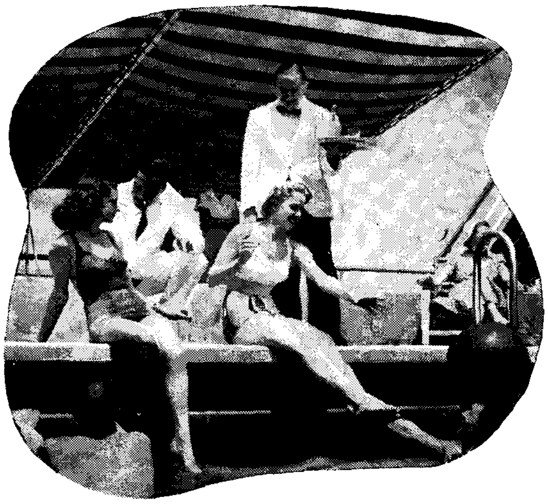
GENERAL

THE LOBBYISTS, by Karl Schriftgiesser (Atlantic-Little, Brown). A lively, opinionated, and thoroughgoing survey of what the author terms "the art and business of influencing lawmakers," a type of activity that might be said to have originated in this country with the Boston Tea Party. After a glance at our most noted or notorious lobbies of the past, Mr. Schriftgiesser goes on to remark that high-pressuring legislators has now reached such a state that it's generally considered to be an "important and necessary ingredient of democracy" instead of fundamentally sinister, and he discusses at some length the loopholes that he (along with several Congressional committees) thinks exist in the Regulation of Lobbying Act of 1946. Since group effort, rather than the old-fashioned "pressure-boy" type of lobbying, now dominates the scene, Mr. Schriftgiesser spends much of his time wading into the various organizations and foundations, some of them tax-exempt, that are responsible for flooding the country with items of violently partisan literature as well as for buttonholing congressmen, and he pays special attention to the efforts made a while back, by the Committee for Constitutional Government, to put a copy, a digest, or even a distortion of John T. Flynn's "The Road Ahead" into the hands of every man, woman, and tot in the country. Mr. Schriftgiesser's views don't coincide at any point with Mr. Flynn's, and his book is undoubtedly going to play havoc with the blood pressure of any admirer of the latter author.

THE LAUGHING PHILOSOPHER, by M. P. Willcocks (Macmillan). A biography of François Rabelais by the woman who wrote the fine study of Henry Fielding called "A True-Born Englishman." Rabelais is a difficult man to write a biography of, because there are so many lacunae in our factual knowledge of his life. The author's method here has been to make use of what *is* known of him—that he was a practicing physician, a somewhat equivocal monk, and a scholar and literary man famous in his own day—and then to interpret his life through the pages of "Gargantua" and "Pantagruel." She reasons that what those two giants, and other characters in the satire,



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saw, did, said, and thought reflects the attitude toward life of their creator, and she constructs from all this a lifelike portrait of a great humanist. She also emphasizes, and probably quite rightly, the influence exerted on Rabelais by the poet Villon, who vanished some years before Rabelais was born—particularly the part Villon played as model for the rascally and amusing Panurge. A very entertaining book, even though it may tempt some scholars to reach for their crossbows.

ALONE HE WENT, by Anthony Richardson (Norton). An account of the vicissitudes undergone by Wing Commander Basil Embry, of the R.A.F., after his plane was shot down over France in the course of what was scheduled to be his final operational flight, in the spring of 1940. Mr. Richardson, in close collaboration with the protagonist of his story, has taken infinite pains over every detail of the Commander's capture by the Germans, his escape, and his heartbreakingly slow progress across France to safety, but he is considerably hampered by the circumstance that his material has at this date a very familiar ring. It's too bad, since Mr. Richardson is an excellent reporter, who manages to steer almost clear of the self-conscious laconism favored by most writers dealing with the wartime experiences of the British.

POWELL OF THE COLORADO, by William Culp Darrah (Princeton). The story of Major John Wesley Powell (1834-1902), one of the pioneer scientists who founded the United States Geological Survey and one of the gadflies that stung a reluctant federal government into an interest in conservation of our natural resources, irrigation of the desert, and the preservation of American Indian culture. Powell, a self-taught geologist and ethnologist, was a captain during the Civil War, and lost his right arm at Shiloh. After the war, when his family and friends considered him incapacitated for anything but teaching, he travelled through the West, poking into Indian mounds and surveying unmapped territory. In the eighteen-seventies, he led a daring expedition, in three flimsy rowboats, down the Colorado River. Mr. Darrah has recounted the exploits of this gallant well, but just possibly at too great length; still, if you want to read about a man like Powell, you probably want to read

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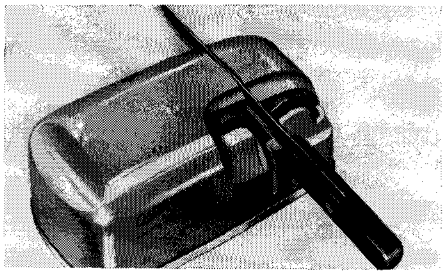

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all about him. Good photographs of Indians and the West, taken in Powell's day.

Melville's Early Life and "Redburn," by William H. Gilman (New York University Press). A study of Herman Melville's early years, particularly the obscure ones between his birth, in 1819, and 1841. Its main object is to show that Melville's imaginative fourth novel, "Redburn," the tale of a boy's first sea voyage, which most critics and biographers have taken as straight personal history, is nothing of the sort. Mr. Gilman assails this "biographical fallacy," setting forth convincingly the wide difference between Melville's own first encounter with the sea and the fictional one of young Wellingborough Redburn. To take "Redburn" as literal biography, the author contends, is not only to miss the whole point of an interesting, if immature, novel but to deny Melville his artistic birthright. Because of the lack of complete records, Mr. Gilman has naturally been unable to clear the matter up entirely, but he has done a thorough and highly competent piece of work with what was available to him.

The Tolstoy Home: Diaries of Tatiana Sukhotin-Tolstoy (Columbia). In the family of Leo Tolstoy, which included a great many children as well as, frequently, in-laws and disciples, almost everybody kept a diary; anyone who failed to do this eventually published memoirs. The household was very complex and full of what are now called "tensions," and it sometimes resembles an immense novel that Tolstoy himself might have created. This journal by his eldest daughter, published for the first time in any language, falls into place in the family drama. The section here printed extends from the autumn of 1878, when Tatiana was thirteen, to the spring following her father's death in 1910. She was much involved with her father and much influenced by his moral ideas, and she suffered in the most acute way from a conflict between a desire to emulate him by trying to reject the flesh and a desire to love and be loved. She did not marry till she was thirty-five. Her recital of all this is painful, but loaded with striking detail and, like everything connected with Tolstoy, somehow rather inspiring.

The Maestro: The Life of Toscanini, by Howard Taubman (Simon & Schuster). From the start

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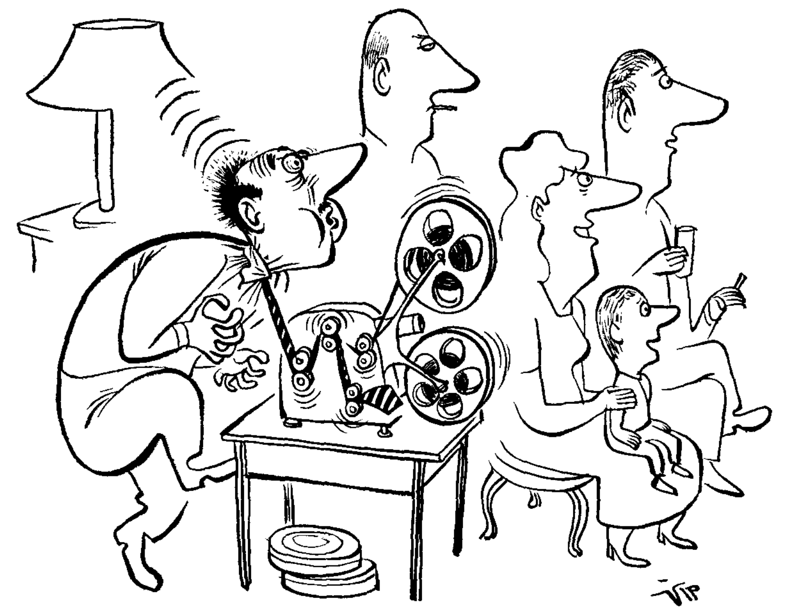

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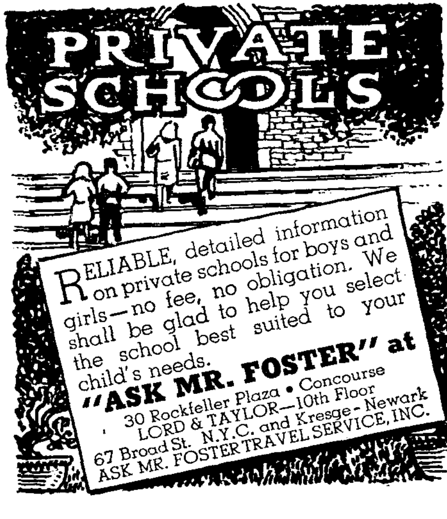

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of his relations with music, as a nine-year-old student at the Parma Conservatory, Toscanini was called a genius, a title he has always declined, reserving it for Beethoven, Verdi, and Wagner. Except for invention, he had—and still has—every musical gift, including tremendous vitality and (this, perhaps, is the real secret) a fanatic's drive for the ideal. For sixty-five years, he has been producing legendary performances, while legends have accumulated about him. They are all chronicled here. Mr. Taubman, the music editor of the *Times*, has toured as a reporter with Toscanini, knows him, his family, and friends, and seems never to have missed a concert since he was old enough to go to one. His style is dull, but enough of his idol's *brio* comes through to make an exciting book. Illustrated and indexed.

FRITZ KREISLER, by Louis P. Lochner (Macmillan). This, the first biography of the Grand Old Man of the violin, is an adoring record of a great career, a book so laden with tributes and testimonials that it manages to be sweet, uplifting, and a little monotonous, all at once. Kreisler, a charming, easygoing Viennese with a talent that was promptly recognized, is notable both for his charities and for a remarkable ability to make friends in a business that is not exactly studded with lovable fellows. The shadow amid all the sunshine in this book is provided by the passages dealing with the incredible campaign, initiated by one D.A.R. chapter and continued by a few American Legion posts, that forced the violinist off American concert platforms during the First World War. That Kreisler survived this three-year embargo makes reading about the interlude no less embarrassing.

•

Last night I met a movie actress. "Your are gorgeour," I told her, and then we both got to wondering just exactly what the word means. I still don't know.—H. M.
—*Frank Colby in the Ithaca* (*N. Y.*) *Journal.*

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[*From the Hammond* (*Ind.*) *Times*]

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